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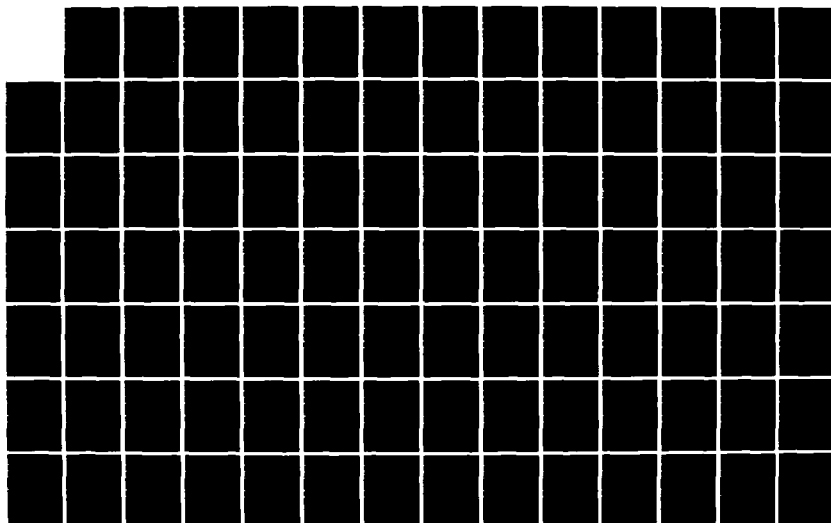
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WHAT SOVIET COMMANDERS FEAR FROM THEIR OWN FORCES

Nathan Leites

May 1978

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PREFACE

I have gathered the reactions portrayed below from the three principal publications in which they would be displayed: the Soviet armed forces' daily *Red Star* (KZ), the ground forces' monthly, *Military Herald* (VV), the armed forces' political monthly, *Communist of the Armed Forces* (KVS).

The study concerns the decade from the mid-sixties to the mid-seventies. I have been unable to discern important developments.

Many of the statements quoted are attributed to junior officers. But they appear in publications which ~~I would surmise to~~ express in every detail the preoccupations of the High Command.

To ascertain with assurance what is distinctive in the High Command's beliefs about weaknesses in its forces, one would have to make a point-by-point comparison with, say, American ones; which does not appear below. It is possible that I have mistaken common reactions as distinctively Soviet; and omitted others, believing them, erroneously, to be shared by the Soviets with us.

Each of the weaknesses presented below is surely the subject of *worry* for the Soviet High Command; they would not have brought it up otherwise--particularly, given the Soviet disposition to keep silent about unfavorable events in their domain. But this does of course not entail that the *incidence* of damaging conduct is high in all or even any of the aspects to be portrayed. The Soviet High Command probably believes in "nipping" unfavorable developments "in the bud"; it could be permanently displaying dangers which it perennially succeeds in containing, or with regard to which it exaggerates how much counteraction they require. It needs other data to answer the queries thus posed. But first they have to be put, which I am attempting below.

Emphases, unless otherwise indicated, are mine.

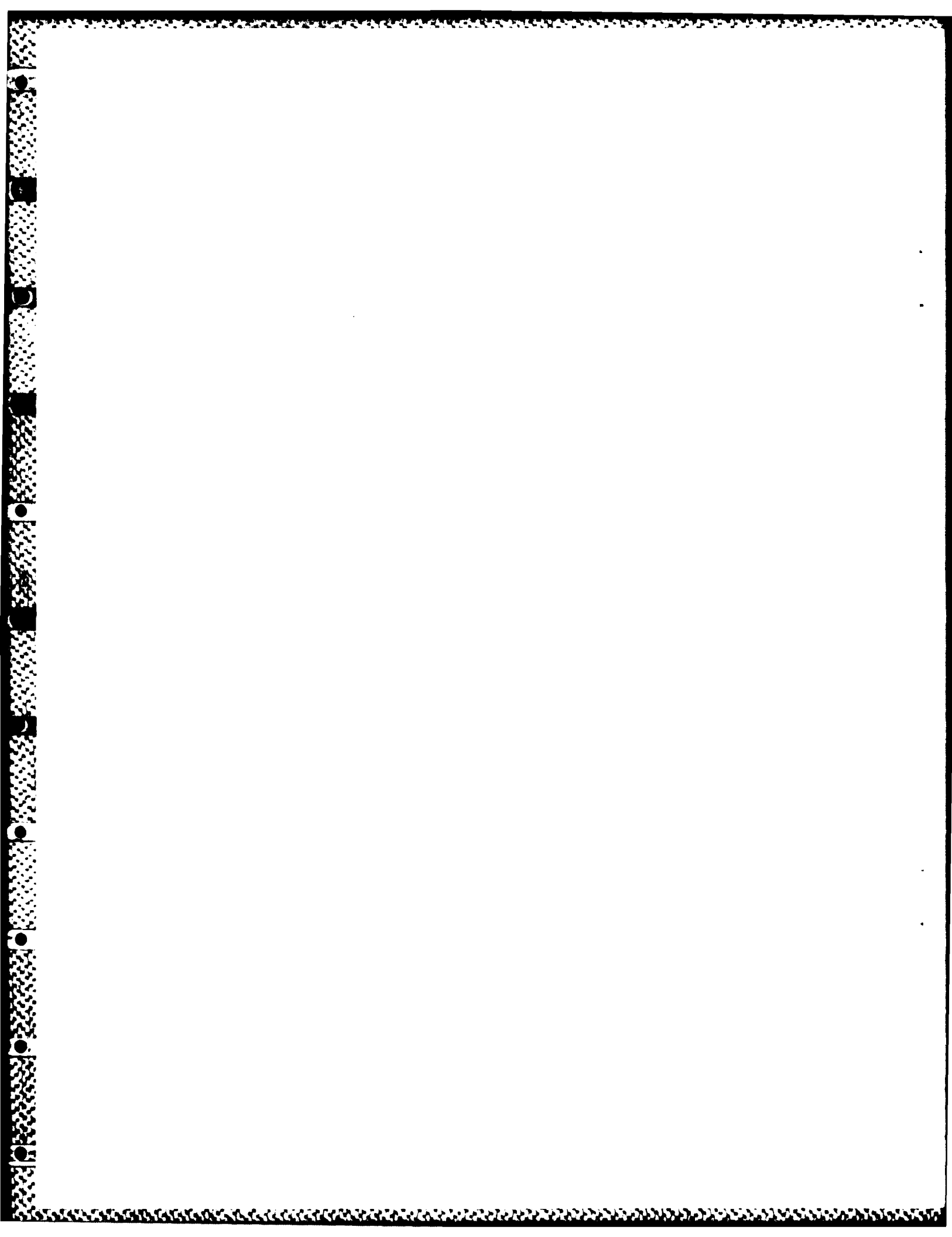
To Herbert Goldhamer's *The Soviet Soldier* (New York 1975) I am indebted well beyond the degree indicated by the references to this study found below.

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PART I. INEFFICIENCY

"Look at an officer," a peer-observer notes, "he is busy from the early morning until the late evening. But when you ask him to draw the results (*podvesti itogi*) of the day, it suddenly turns out that the coefficient of useful action is so low as to astonish himself. He was twirling around as a squirrel in the wheel, but the yield was minimal."¹ Thus there are those who "do not run away from the job, but don't do it either (*i ot dela ne begayut, i delo ne delayut*)."

The High Command discerns in its forces a pervasive penchant towards busy inefficiency--"muddle-headed bustle masquerading as efficiency"² which it combats frontally as well as indirectly. "It is necessary for everybody to be deeply aware of the following," an officer may explain. "The struggle for economy in POL is not only a struggle for the saving of kilograms of the people's wealth, a lengthening of the time of service of combat technique." Rather, "this particular struggle also exercises a big educational influence on personnel, accustoms people to precision, order, discipline" ³

Section 1: AIMLESSNESS

"Talking with me, platoon commander Senior Lieutenant M. Kuznetsov complained about the insufficiency of time.

" -- Exercises, preparing for them, establishing out-lines; and now I have to go to the barracks, too . . .

" -- With what aim?

"The officer looked at me with evident incomprehension:

" -- Well, to look around in general, to talk a little (*pobesedovat'*) with the soldiers . . .

"I remember how my former superior, Major M. Zhelezovskii, gave it to subordinate officers if they appeared in barracks simply so, without a definite aim, coming 'in general (*voobshche*)'" ⁴

¹Col. Yu. Galkin, KZ, July 3, 1976.

²KVS, 1975, No. 19, p. 33.

³Capt. V. Matveev, KZ, April 2, 1977.

⁴Col. Yu. Galkin, KZ, July 3, 1976. The dots are in the text.

Bestsel'nost' (aimlessness) is a familiar word in the language of the High Command, designating a major vice. So are *tselustrem-lennost'*, *tselenapravlennost'* (aimdirectedness), naming a weighty virtue.

It seems worth explaining that there is a direct relation between the degree to which the components of an operation are directed toward an aim and the probability of its success: "All these forms of work (never mind which--NL) have a very high yield because they are all aim-directed."¹

One may proclaim a requirement to pursue an aim. "In the meeting encounter," the Field Manual of 1936 declared in words which could be employed today, "orders must pursue the attainment of . . . definite (*opredelennuyi*) aims" (paragraph 161, emphases in the text).

So strong seems to the High Command its subordinates' propensity to take pleasure in an action without regard for its effect that it seems appropriate to oppose this incorrect conception of the virtue called *aktivnost'*. "*Aktivnost'* . . . must serve an objective (*tselesoobraznyi*)."² Every superfluous maneuver, every combat action which is not inevitably indispensable for the attainment of the objective of the operation hides an enormous danger," an analyst of the twenties explained in more literate fashion than he would today, "the danger of carrying us away from (*uwlech' ot*) the objective In an operation, there must be nothing superfluous; it must be the incarnation (*voploshchenie*) of aim-directedness. The form of the operation . . . must recall not . . . the rococo . . . but a Greek temple."³

For the High Command discerns in its forces a penchant to act not with a view to obtaining an impact, but rather so as to discharge

¹ Lt.-Col. V. Polezhaev, KZ, March 20, 1977.

² Maj. V. Vozovikov, VV, 1972, No. 4, p. 33.

³ A. A. Svechin, 1927, in A. B. Kadishev, ed: Questions of Strategy and Operational Art in Soviet Military Studies (1917-1940), Moscow 1965, p. 246.

feelings. "It is necessary," the Field Manual of 1936 insisted in a vein which still prevails today, "to educate every commander and fighter in the firm knowledge that only precise (*metkii*) organized, disciplined fire will defeat the enemy; and that, inversely, disorderly (*besporyadochnyi*) fire, apart from entailing waste of ammunition, is merely an expression of one's own anxiety (*bespokoistvo*) and weakness (*slabost'*)" (pp. 19-20).

To be "aim-directed," it is implied, cannot be expected of ordinary human beings; it is a part of the commander's excellence. "The aim-directedness of the decision," thus already the Field Manual of 1944, "is a basis (*osnova*) of leadership" (p. 18). It is "in the commander" that "the aim-directedness of the actions of the unit is concentrated."¹ Beyond the home truth that it is the commander who sets the unit's aim, what is, I surmise, implied here is that it is the commander who prevents his subordinates from succumbing to the natural bent (*stikhiia*) of aimlessness. "The actions of troops," a senior officer teaches, "receive . . . directedness (*napravlenmost'*) after (*posle*) a precise and clear objective has been given to them and . . . the manner of conducting the combat has been determined." Once more, "such directedness is conferred (*pridatsya*) upon all actions of subordinates by the decision of the commander"²

It is to illustrate its excellence that one will say of a unit, "In its actions one feels a precise calculation of the commander."³

* * * * *

¹ Editorial, VV, 1972, No. 6, p. 3.

² Maj.-Gen. I. Podoved, VV, 1976, No. 3, p. 60.

³ Lt.-Cols. G. Kashub and A. Zakharenko, and Maj. G. Miranovich, KZ, February 9, 1978.

Subordinates, the High Command suspects, are all too ready to "set great hopes (*upovanie*) on the development of an enterprise left to itself (*samotek*)"; to forecast, wrongly and conveniently, that "everything will take shape (*opredelit'sya*) by itself";¹ to entertain "the calculation that the concurrence of circumstances will be favorable."²

Hence the need to teach that "hopes for favorable developments occurring by themselves (*nadezhda na samotek*) are bad hopes."³ At its very best, spontaneity is too slow. Thus, for instance, with regard to the maturing of junior commanders, "one cannot wait until life will have taught them, until they will come to everything by themselves."⁴

Rather it is "necessary" to "fight energetically" for that advance, "to forcibly accelerate (*forsirovat'*) the commander's path towards spiritual and military maturity."⁵

The penchant toward "spontaneity" should be incessantly combated. Thus "in the analyses of exercises" a model instructor "did not omit any occasion to show to what spontaneity (*samotek*) leads."⁶ Not learning the lesson entails a severe sanction. "The Military Council removed the ship commander, Captain of the Second Rank, I. Yunakov from his post. The penalty was severe, but one cannot entertain any doubt about it," for "this commander did not want to strain (*napryazhat'*) his forces as it behooves, he believed that everything would come by itself (*vse poluchitsya samo soboi*)."⁷

¹KVS, 1976, No. 7, p. 57.

²Editorial, VV, 1969, No. 10, p. 4.

³Lt.-Gen. N. Mil'chenko, KZ, March 31, 1977.

⁴Vice-Admiral A. Sorokin, KZ, January 11, 1976.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Lt.-Col. I. Emel'yanov, KZ, June 26, 1976.

⁷Vice-Admiral A. Sorokin, KZ, January 11, 1976.

Section 2: MINDLESSNESS

"Twice the company attacked the positions of the 'enemy,' and each time without success. Lieutenant K. Sviridov . . . [acted] without taking account of the fire and maneuver possibilities of the unit. He did not even try to discover the fire system of the 'enemy.' . . . In one word, the company expended its forces in vain"¹

A senior officer discerns a "low ability of some pilots to think logically, to plan their actions";² according to General Altunin, there is among officers an inclination "to take decisions on the spur of the moment (*navskidku*), without a sufficiently thorough analysis of the situation and of calculations."³

Many, it seems implied, may err outrageously. Thus it is worth presenting the cautionary tale of how in simulated combat "the platoon commander indicated distances from targets with regard to *his* tank" and how then "the commanders of the other tanks mechanically accepted this indication for themselves, though the distances, in their case, were, in reality, different."⁴ "If . . . supplies are organized thoughtlessly (*neprodumno*)," a military leader thinks it appropriate to explain, "a unit may find itself without ammunition and fuel in the most critical moment."⁵

The path from the heart's desire to the unit's objective may be short:

"Once Major Nabiev was conversing with Captain Bondarev. The company was just preparing to undertake socialist obligations for the new training year. Bondarev remarked with a proud smile: We count on shortening the time for bringing equipment to combat readiness by 25 percent. He waited for praise, but Nabiev was silent, clearly turning something around in his mind. Finally he asked:

¹Col. V. Savel'ev, KZ, April 24, 1976.

²Col.-Gen. A. Koldunov, KZ, June 6, 1976.

³KVS, 1970, No. 18, p. 46.

⁴Lt.-Col. A. Sychev, KZ, April 7, 1976.

⁵Col.-Gen. I. Pavlovskii, VV, 1964, No. 4, p. 6.

" -- In what way did this obligation originate?

" -- Our neighbors undertook to shorten that time, some by 10 percent and others by 15--explained Bondarev. -- Are we any worse? We decided to out-strip them

" -- Give a basis for your obligation, asked the commander. With what reserves are you going to fulfill it?

"And here the smile definitely disappeared from the face of Bondarev. It turned out that the obligation was undertaken by eye (*na glazok*)."¹

The urge to minimize cost is feeble. "Are not the mistakes in a decision glossed over (*sghlazhivat'sya*)," General Altunin asks, "when the unit fulfills its task on the whole?" That is, "do we always think of the price with which victory in real battle would be purchased if the decision taken by this or that commander were executed?"²

As (we have seen it above) following one's bent is apt to induce catastrophe--"as long as spontaneity (*stikhiia*) was raging (*bushevat'*)," one may say³--deliberateness may be recommended for measures for which it might seem to come naturally in the West. Observing that in a model unit "much attention is given to the distribution of the personnel between various tasks," one may indicate that "the protection of important objects is entrusted to the most disciplined fighters. The battle flag is guarded by soldiers who have received the grade of excellent. Young soldiers, not yet having sufficient experience, are assigned to sentry duty." The point is that only "such a careful selection allows the commander to . . . forestall accidents, delinquency (*prostupok*) of the fighters."⁴

¹Col. A. Kulakov, KZ, January 9, 1977. Dots in the text.

²KVS, 1970, No. 18, p. 46.

³Sr. Lt. A. Tkachev, KZ, March 20, 1977.

⁴Col. N. Meleshkin, KVS, 1976, No. 12, p. 29.

Calculating one's conduct is apparently so uncongenial to the High Command's subordinates that it seems worth presenting it as a mark of excellence, shown to be that by Science: it is "Soviet military psychology which has proved that in the measure in which man's psyche is getting strong (*ukreplenie*), he acquires the habit . . . of thinking through (*obdumyvat'*) his conduct."¹

It is appropriate to detail what that strange stance actually involves. "To calculate (*rasschitat'*) thoroughly" an analyst explains, "means to correctly estimate the factors' time and locality, to compare the combat potential of one's own units with those of the enemy, to discern the relationship of forces and means, the probable dynamics of their change."²

It does not seem awkward to insist that one should act *after* one has thought. "We wartime commanders," a senior officer proudly recalls, "made, every time, an all-sided evaluation of the forces of the enemy, divined his calculations, found the weak spot in his defense. *Only after that* did we take a . . . decision to attack him."³ "Think first and order subsequently (*snachala podumai, potom prikazyvai*)" appears to be a rule young officers should keep in mind.

The rewards are high. "If thought through in advance," one may show, "the fire of even a single weapon can inflict serious losses on the enemy"⁴

Unless constrained, the ordinary human being just won't calculate. "Many officers," one may note, "do not yet know how to create in exercises a difficult tactical situation which would force (*zastavit'*) the trainees to reflect (*zadumat'sya*) before taking this or that decision."⁵

¹ Col. A. Petrov, VV, 1969, No. 5, p. 60.

² Col. I. Vorov'ev, KZ, January 27, 1976.

³ Maj.-Gen. V. Platov, KVS 1976, No. 1, p. 58.

⁴ Col.-Gen. A. Babadzhanyan, VV, 1964, No. 8, p. 8.

⁵ Editorial, VV, 1976, No. 1, p. 4.

To have a "reflective (*vdumchivyi*) approach to the solution of every question," always to remember that "here it is important to think everything through" is the mark of the excellent commander. "For the foremost (*peredovyi*) military collective it is characteristic that combat . . . preparation is planned in a well thought-out way."¹ "Before giving any order to a subordinate, the *experienced* commander will have weighed all aspects well."²

It is something to marvel at that certain officers "never acted at random";³ that "in the course of [simulated] combat in the depth of the 'enemy's' defense, Major Kutsyi did not for a minute forget about intelligence."⁴ "Such a direction of the counterattack," one may insist, "was chosen not by accident (*ne sluchaino*).". Rather, "it was based on the terrain and the area of deployment of the company."⁵ Having made the point that "in exercises in this company everything was different," an observer recalls "one more thing: in the course of training the commander obtained (*dobyvat'*) that every fighter act deliberately (*soznatel'no*)."⁶ *Soznatel'nost'*, consciousness, is a virtue the fight for which never ends.

¹ Marshal B. Kutakhov, KVS, 1975, No. 1, p. 32.

² Col. A. Petrov, VV, 1969, No. 5, p. 61.

³ KVS, 1976, No. 1, p. 58.

⁴ Editorial, VV, 1972, No. 1, p. 4.

⁵ Lt.-Col. P. Kudryavtsev, VV, 1962, No. 8, p. 22.

⁶ Major V. Vozovikov, VV, 1972, No. 4, p. 33.

Section 3: INDECISION

Avoiding lack of calculation, one may fall into indecision (*nereshitel'nost'*).

More particularly, one may be subjected to doubts, leading to "vacillation (*kolebanie*).\" Hence the requirement, in General Altunin's words, "to surmount doubts," "to reduce vacillation in the taking of a decision to a minimum," "to avoid . . . vacillation in the taking of decisions";¹ to possess "the capacity to take a decision without vacillating *even* in a situation which is insufficiently clear."²

Leaning over backwards, one should *present* to subordinates an air of certainty. "In assigning tasks," General Pavlovskii teaches, "one must preserve . . . a categorical manner (*kategorichnost'*) so that subordinates be convinced: the decision adopted by the commander is the only correct one." For "this creates a corresponding . . . mood (*nastroi*) among the personnel . . . confidence (*uverennost'*) in success."³

Once a commander has taken a decision, it might be useful for him to *feel* such certainty himself. "Fine fellow (*molodets*), battalion commander!, Major-General Vitalii Andreevich Tsapko . . . approached Guards Captain Valeryi Demitkin [in a maneuver] . . . And already addressing himself to all the officers who without a command had assembled around them, the general . . . said: 'Do you know what has pleased me most of all in your comrade? His boldness on the battlefield. His boldness deriving from the . . . certainty that in the given situation one must act thus and only thus'"⁴

¹KVS, 1970, No. 18, p. 42.

²Loc. cit., p. 44.

³VV, 1971, No. 1, p. 9.

⁴Col. A. Stibnev, KZ, September 3, 1976.

Section 4: CARELESSNESS

"Like weeds in the field," an analyst observes, "there are often, in an order given by mouth, empty, *unnecessary words*: 'so to say,' 'if possible,' 'if the situation allows,' 'act without any restraint,' 'this can be increased, or, in another case, reduced,' etc."¹

Or an order may repeat one already issued.

Hence the need for General Pavlovskii to insist that "the commander must not issue the same order twice,"² and for the standard requirement of "extreme brevity" of commands.

Given the contrary penchant, "it is indispensable to *teach* commanders and staff officers in exercises . . . to formulate combat orders with extreme brevity," "in laconic fashion."³

"When he sits down at his desk," one may remark about a *model* commander, "it is a pleasure to see how he works. Not one superfluous movement . . .":⁴ he is free from the "fuss (*sueta*)" of "nervousness."

* * * * *

As the High Command discerns in its forces a disposition towards *ambiguity* and confusion in orders, it becomes pertinent to observe that "a lack of clarity in the meaning of a combat order entails grave sequels";⁵ "it is pernicious when subordinates receive . . . confused indications of the senior commander."⁶

¹Col. V. Savel'ev, VV, 1977, No. 1, p. 29.

²VV, 1971, No. 1, p. 5.

³Editorial, VV, 1975, No. 10, pp. 3-4.

⁴Col. O. Pogrebtsov, KZ, July 1, 1976.

⁵Editorial, VV, 1975, No. 10, pp. 3-4.

⁶Ibid.

"Giving a command," a senior officer then requires, "the commander must know how to set forth its content so that there is no lack of clarity concerning the mission in the minds of the subordinates." That is, "One must avoid words which subordinates can interpret variously."¹ "The senior commander," an anonymous authority concurs, "must attempt to exclude any possibility of diverging interpretations of his order."²

* * * * *

The High Command discerns a tendency to think and talk "in general terms (*v obshchem i tselom*),"³ "to limit oneself to general indications." "The talk at the exercise," an observer notes, "bore on everything and on nothing (*shel obo vsem i ni o chem*)."⁴ "Some senior commanders, when teaching subordinates," General Kulikov remarks, "are carried away by general theories and omit those questions which are most of all indispensable in practical conduct."⁵ "In its decisions the Party bureau of a unit demanded of the communists to 'strengthen' the education of the personnel, to 'improve' guard duty." However, "such recommendations brought no change." Why? "Only because they bore a general declaratory (*deklarativnyi*) character."⁶

In simulated combat it will apparently not be unexpected if "the fire means of the 'enemy,' the obstacles in front of his forward edge and in the near depth were not thoroughly studied."⁷ "In one exercise," General Pavlovskii notes, "the reports of Officers G. Eibenko and B. Shaplevskii . . . did not contain indications about the time of action, the force and the designs of the enemy. Nor were the

¹ Lt.-Gen. K. Ganeev, KZ, January 21, 1977.

² Editorial, VV, 1975, No. 10, p. 4.

³ Passim, e.g., KVS, 1967, No. 9, p. 5.

⁴ Capt. Yu. Gudzenko, KZ, January 14, 1976.

⁵ VV, 1967, No. 2, p. 50.

⁶ Maj. M. Kotvitskii, KVS, 1967, No. 1, p. 36.

⁷ Editorial, VV, 1976, No. 5, p. 3.

missions of his troops specified."¹ "In how standardized a fashion," muses a junior officer, "we often approach certain elements of combat! For instance, in the repulse of a counterattack. Is it really indifferent to the tankmen . . . which type of vehicles the enemy has, which antitank weapons? If the enemy tanks are heavy, one must fight them in one fashion, if they are medium or light quite differently." Yet, "we sometimes prefer to repulse a faceless counterattack. Often one can hear: if you would begin to impose nuances on the subordinates, you won't find time for the main things."² "I asked," reports another officer in the same vein, "one of the company commanders: 'What type of tank counterattacked you?' The answer was silence." The query which follows is already known to the reader: "But is it really indifferent to the tankman what enemy vehicles he encounters? For the thickness of their armor, the calibre of their guns varies It is appropriate to conduct a duel with heavy tanks in one fashion, and with light ones in another manner. In one case it is advantageous to fire from a long distance, in the other case to approach." Yet, "in the exercise in question the peculiarities of the 'enemy' were not taken into account." But the unit's ordeal was not over; for "now a staff officer asked Senior Lieutenant N. Sokol on which concrete 'enemy' the battery should fire, and did not receive an answer which made sense. Once more because the 'enemy' turned out to be indeterminate (*neopredelennyi*), having, as one says, no face. Intelligence had no need to find targets by revealing indicators. The officer ordering fire had no need to analyze information (which did not arrive at all)."³ "In tactical exercises," observes another officer, "one can sometimes hear reports such as these: 'The forward edge of the 'enemy' goes through the western

¹VV, 1968, No. 7, p. 8.

²Capt. V. Misyura, KZ, April 16, 1976.

³Lt.-Col. A. Shpin', KZ, January 22, 1977.

(or the eastern) slopes of such-and-such a height,' 'the strongpoints of the 'enemy' have been discovered in such-and-such spots,' without a precise indication of their limits and of the positions of their means of fire." But, "in such cases it becomes necessary to interrupt the commander and to explain that the 'eastern' or 'western' slopes may extend over hundreds of meters or even several kilometers, that it is necessary to indicate precisely the position of the first trench from point to point, from bush to bush, from mound to mound." And "as to strongpoints, it is necessary to determine . . . where the machine guns are, where the antitank weapons, the tanks, the armored personnel carriers, the artillery and so forth."¹

One may be as unthorough about one's own posture as about that of the enemy. Thus "one commander, setting his hopes entirely on his experience, affirms that for him even a cursory acquaintance is sufficient for precisely evaluating the situation in a unit."²

Against this penchant, the model officer: "We did not hurry to arrive at conclusions (*s vyvodami ne speshili*). We decided to study the situation in detail"³

On the other hand, the delay required for getting specifics which should have been available in the first place may lead to failure. "And now ground control reported to the interceptor, 'I see a group of aircraft.' Naturally, such an indeterminate report rendered Rykov [the interceptor pilot] perplexed. He asked that the aim of the 'enemy' aircraft be more fully characterized, that their direction be indicated and the distance from them." Finally "more precise information on the air 'enemy' arrived." However, by then "the indeterminateness of the report of the ground control man who

¹Lt.-Gen. S. Krivda, KVS, 1977, No. 1, p. 59.

²Col. I. Dokuchaev, KZ, March 18, 1976.

³Maj. G. Shafikov, KVS, 1977, No. 13, p. 33.

first discovered the targets had let the airman down. For during the time required for supplementary information about the 'enemy' the latter discovered the interceptor and prepared a strike on him."¹

If the "sides" are not correctly assessed, it seems worthwhile to point out, the mission is apt to be wrongly set. "Can the Commander," it seems appropriate to ask, "adopt a correct decision . . . if he does not know precisely where his troops are at a given time?"² "Some [commanders in exercises]," an analyst observes, "not bothering with estimates of the enemy, put before their subordinates tasks which do not in realistic fashion take account of the sides' combat possibilities. Then units receive a task beyond their forces or, inversely, beneath them."³

One's own *plans* may be as vague as one's estimates of the enemy or of oneself. In simulated combat it may occur that "the directions of attack of every tank were not thoroughly studied, the procedure for overcoming the minefield not thought through."⁴ "One can't say," General Pavlovskii remarks with moderation, "that our regimental commanders have no plans But they often lack concreteness The main tasks and aims are not determined (*opredelit'*)."⁵

So it goes with *orders*. "One still finds commanders," Marshal Batitskii notes, "who are incapable of precisely determining the tasks of their subordinates."⁶ "Field exercises disclosed," an observer reveals, "that Senior Lieutenant Stepanov posed tasks to his subordinates in a manner which lacked concreteness (*nekonkretno*)" and that "some officers issue instructions in an imprecise manner (*nechetko*)."⁷ "The leader of the exercise," in a frequently mentioned

¹Col. V. Uryuzhnikov, KZ, January 7, 1977.

²Col. D. Shapovalov, VV, 1965, No. 2, p. 31.

³Col. V. Savel'ev, VV, 1977, No. 1, p. 28.

⁴Editorial, VV, 1976, No. 5, p. 3.

⁵VV, 1971, No. 1, p. 4.

⁶KZ, January 16, 1976.

⁷Maj. Yu. Soldatov, VV, 1970, No. 8, p. 66.

type of case, "did not specify against which targets and when the artillery would direct its fire, how radio contact was to be utilized, which signals for the indication of targets and for commands were to be applied."¹ Indeed, "there are cases in which . . . tasks are put imprecisely and sound about as follows: 'to acquire and track targets [enemy aircraft] in a broad spectrum of altitudes . . .'"² Again and again it occurs in exercises that "combat missions were indicated in a fashion lacking concreteness. Instructions from commanders consisted often merely in orders such as 'forward,' 'increase speed,' 'take to the right.'"³ "Lieutenant N. Vasil'ev," an analyst observes, "addressed essentially one demand to his subordinates. 'Forward! Fire!' What kind of fire, on what concrete targets remained unclear. As a result some targets were literally riddled, while others stayed unstruck."⁴

So we see that "any imprecision in a command may cost dearly,"⁵ that "it is . . . pernicious if subordinates receive instructions which are not entirely concrete."⁶

Hence the stress on the requirement of a "thorough elaboration of tasks,"⁷ "excluding mere approximation." When giving an order, one may say, don't forget to determine the following: who is responsible for what, which forces and means are assigned to the mission, its extent and the time by which it is to be accomplished. One may describe a particular plan for simulated combat with a wealth of

¹ Editorial, VV, 1976, No. 5, p. 3.

² Lt.-Col. O. Tret'yakov, KZ, January 16, 1977. Dots in the text.

³ Editorial, VV, 1974, No. 3, p. 3.

⁴ Col. A. Agdamov, KZ, November 2, 1976.

⁵ Lt.-Gen. K. Ganeev, KZ, January 21, 1977.

⁶ Editorial, VV, 1975, No. 10, p. 4.

⁷ Passim, e.g., KVS, 1976, No. 10, p. 8.

capital detail which might be omitted in the West as all too evident. "The commander of a motorized battalion, Major S. Petrishchev," we learn from a general officer, "prepared himself for breaking through a prepared defense of the 'enemy.' He accorded particular attention to the breaking of the enemy system of antitank defense. With this objective, he determined the order of the suppression of ATGMs and tanks, precisely determined the targets which ought to be destroyed by the artillerists, the motorized riflemen, and the attack tanks, in the attack from the front and also on the flanks and in the depth. . . . The battalion commander indicated the lines of protective artillery fire. He indicated which positions respective to each other the motorized riflemen and tanks should occupy at each stage of the battle, and particularly during the maneuver aiming at the flank and the rear of the defense. He directed attention to which targets were the most dangerous ones for the tanks and the infantry, and determined the order of their annihilation by accompanying and supporting weapons. Major S. Petrishchev clarified to his subordinates in detail which targets and objects in the direction of the attack of the battalion would be suppressed by aviation and combat helicopters, he indicated the means of identification of aircraft, infantry, and tanks."¹

In these conditions it can be a matter for praise that "Lieutenant Lazarenko gave precise combat assignments";² that recently "commanders --that is an indubitable fact--began to direct the actions of their subordinates more precisely" ³

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¹Maj.-Gen. I. Vorov'ev, KZ, November 22, 1977.

²KZ, November 2, 1976.

³Ibid.

Lack of specificity may be *incompleteness*: certain aspects of an operation may be altogether neglected. "No reconnaissance was . . . organized . . . nobody thought of masking."¹

A commander may fail to issue those rules which Regulations leave it precisely to him to determine. For "on a series of questions, the Regulations leave a certain independence to the commander. His task consists in . . . taking the most appropriate decisions on these questions. To them belong for instance the distribution of activities during the day, the time for reviewing equipment, the rules for handing out weapons, etc." Now "sometimes this is done with insufficient thoroughness. In some units, for instance, the rules for safeguarding and handing out keys for firing locks are not determined, the mode of relieving men on duty is not fixed, the time for check-ups in the battalion and in the regiment as also the days on which to leave for exercises and on which to return from them, with the orchestra playing, are not determined"; while "all this should . . . be regulated in precise fashion."²

One may forget to set boundaries of time (see Section 6).

"Private V. Gol'tyapin was visited by his wife. The soldier asked the officer for permission to accompany her to the station. Gol'tyapin returned to barracks at a very late hour.

" -- Why did you not return in time? the captain asked severely.

" -- How 'not in time?' the soldier answered, astonished.

"And only then did the officer remember that he had not indicated to the subordinate the length of the leave."³

¹ Maj.-Gen. V. Grozev and Lt.-Col. D. Kudinov, VV, 1967, No. 3, p. 62.

² Editorial, VV, 1971, No. 7, p. 4.

³ Col. A. Petrov, VV, 1969, No. 5, p. 61.

"I ordered Private V. Dumler to go to the equipment yard and to fetch accumulators. I wait and wait, but he doesn't come. I send yet another soldier. It turns out that V. Dumler on the way encountered a friend and lingered on. -- I didn't know, he said, that the matter was urgent, so I stayed on for a minute, it's a long time I had not seen this friend.

Perhaps this is a typical pretext, but it is not excluded that V. Dumler really decided not to make haste with the fulfillment of the order only because I had not indicated the required time."¹

"Exercises," an analyst observes, "show that . . . incompleteness of combat orders . . . is . . . widespread" ²

"Captain Chernyshenko decided . . . to attack through hollows and low-lying lands, not considering the fact that they were covered with snow The peculiarities of the material-technical and rear support were insufficiently taken into account. The delivery of ammunition and POL turned out to be impossible, as well as the evacuation of the wounded and of infected or damaged equipment. Such things would not have occurred had the battalion commander more thoroughly studied local conditions But Captain Chernyshenko, when taking a decision, remained glued to the map and as a result of this lost sight of exceptionally important questions" ³

In such conditions the High Command stresses the requirement of "a complex approach (*kompleksnost'*)," a major meaning of which is "to neglect nothing."⁴

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¹ Lt. V. Nikolenko, VV, 1973, No. 3, p. 45.

² Col. V. Savel'ev, VV, 1977, No. 1, p. 28.

³ Maj.-Gen. I. Podoved, VV, 1976, No. 3, p. 62.

⁴ Passim, e.g., Sr. Lt. V. Poshchupkin, KZ, September 13, 1976.

To overlook nothing is also not to neglect what may appear as *melochy*, trifles.

The High Command discerns a high incidence of "a contemptuous attitude towards so-called trifles."¹ "Comrade V. Kochetkov," a typical estimate goes, "in no way reacted to many mistakes, considering them insubstantial, not meriting attention."²

Yet inattention to "trifles" is the path to catastrophe:

"After an . . . exercise the staff officer Lieutenant-Colonel A. Kostylev approached Captain Kiselev:

" -- Which mistakes were made by the trainees?

" -- They worked well. Now there were a few small details (*melochy*) . . .

" -- But account must be taken of them too. . . . In battle every 'petty detail' can become a disaster."³

And care for detail is the road to success:

"In his early years as an officer Navy Captain of the First Rank Lyulin . . . considered that the faultlessness in judging people which his commanders showed comes with rank. It turned out that it does not come by itself, but is conquered . . . [also] by the analysis of such small traits which in an ordinary view are considered trifles."⁴

"One must not forget," a senior officer demands, "that sometimes a measure which is small by its scale and the number of participating personnel have a decisive significance for the fulfillment of a cardinal task."⁵

¹Passim, e.g., KVS, 1976, No. 3, p. 40.

²Sr. Lt. V. Knyazev, VV, 1975, No. 3, p. 44.

³Col. O. Pogrebtsov, KZ, July 1, 1976. Dots in the text.

⁴Sr. Lt. A. Tkachev, KZ, March 20, 1977.

⁵Fleet Admiral G. Egorov, KZ, February 27, 1977.

"In the air force," goes a slogan of that service--and should go, according to the High Command, the motto of every service--"there are no trifles, everything is important."¹

In the presence of the penchant to neglect detail, there can't be too much concern for it. "One can say of Major Yu. Artamonov that he is a pedant (*pedant*) in the best meaning of the word": such is the praise bestowed by a fellow officer for a "trait" which deserves "in reality" the supreme rank of being *partiinyi*, of the Party's essence.²

Section 5: UNPREPAREDNESS

There are airmen, an air marshal observes, who do that to which "nobody has a right": "they set their hopes on receiving an illumination in a critical battle situation itself"--and thus "they hope to be victorious without a thorough all-sided preparation for flight."³ "Once the time for firing arrives," such officers will say, "we shall show of what we are capable (*sebya pokazat'*)!"⁴

"The young pilot began to behave tepidly (*s prokhladtsei*) towards tactical training. He justified this by such considerations as these: in the course of combat, it will become clearer which decision to take, everything will be resolved by the pilot's initiative. According to his words, modeling in advance was a mere waste of time."⁵

One may base such a hope on the permanent capacity of one's mind rather than on inspiration through crisis. "The specialists [of a ship engaged in simulated combat]," we hear, "did not work out a reserve variant of action" for the case that their preferred course

¹KVS, 1976, No. 7, p. 52.

²Lt.-Col. A. Korobiv, KZ, February 26, 1977.

³P. Kutakov, KZ, February 4, 1976.

⁴Reported in an Editorial, KZ, April 5, 1977.

⁵Maj. A. Puzanov, KZ, September 6, 1977.

would become inapplicable. "Who should have corrected them? Of course, the specialists of the flagship command. However, Captain of the Second Rank Yu. Khyutiyainen did not do this 'I have everything in my head,' was his easy parade to a question of the senior commander."¹ "The regimental commander," a senior officer observes about a simulated combat, "relied on his personal capacity for managing (*rasporyaditel'nost'*)," and thus "he hoped to make the necessary modifications (*utochnenie*, specifications--a euphemism--NL) in his plans in the dynamics of battle."² He too, thus avoids the distasteful preparation of variants for an impending operation. He yields to the vice of acting "in improvised fashion (*eksromptom*), without prior preparation,"³ where the redundancy between noun and adjective may express how much the High Command feels it has to press against what comes naturally (*stikhiia*). "The aviator", one insists, "cannot rely on intuition, on the situation itself telling (*podskazhat'*) him the path to victory"; rather "it is necessary to prepare oneself in a thought-through (*produmanno*) fashion for every flight."⁴

When there is preparation, there may not be enough of it. It may be limited to the most obvious, neglecting the not less crucial. "However precise the plan of combat . . . preparation be, it cannot play its role," a general officer finds it necessary to recall, "if . . . account is not taken . . . of resources in vehicles, ammunition" Yet, "some staffs still concern themselves with such matters insufficiently, or they begin to work on them only when the exercise is already in full swing"--which is apt to lead to "a break in plans."⁵

By the very timetable they impose superiors may force their subordinates into unpreparedness:

¹ Navy Capt. V. Druzhinin, KZ, June 6, 1976.

² Lt.-Gen. S. Belonoshko, KZ, June 1, 1977.

³ Col.-Gen. F. Krivda, KZ, October 29, 1976.

⁴ Lt.-Gen. P. Safronov, KZ, November 26, 1977.

⁵ Col.-Gen. V. Yakushin, KZ, April 20, 1977.

"An important exercise was imminent. Without a high quality outline it could not be handled. But the day before there were firing exercises day and night. The officers returned deep in the night. And only then did they sit down so as to prepare outlines. Could one demand of them that the outlines be perfect? And this, I underline, is not the only case where officers, not by their own fault, have to start on the preparation of an imminent exercise after retreat has sounded.

I foresee the question: why is the training process planned in such an irrational fashion, the leader of an exercise deprived of time to prepare it? Unfortunately, little depends here on the commander of the company. The themes of the exercise, their succession and duration are determined for every day of the week by the battalion staff. The company commander does not have the right to change anything in the company's timetable. That which comes down from the staff commander is being mechanically entered into the timetable blank."¹

Preparation, it seems worthwhile explaining, is a necessary condition for success. "Take for instance," a military leader teaches, "the commander of a motorized rifle company, Guards Lieutenant V. Rozhin. On his work sheet one can find all the information indispensable for combat. He constantly bestows care on...the instruments of command (*komandirskaya mashina*). In his unit tables of signals, manners of designating targets have been elaborated." Now, the author confronts his recalcitrant officer-readers, "are these petty details (*chto eto, melochi*)? Naturally, no. In battle it will already be too late to establish tables of signals or...agree on manners of designating targets." Unfortunately and ineluctably, "all the work must be performed before."² "Well-prepared units," it is appropriate to recall, "take out many targets with significantly smaller expenditure of ammunition."³ In one simulated combat "the leader of the exercise did not have to interfere." Why? Because "the previous (*predvaritel'nyi*) analysis of all questions which had to be solved made itself felt

¹ Sr. Lt. V. Mechkov, KZ, September 14, 1976.

² General of the Army P. Belik, VV, 1975, No. 9, p. 23.

³ Col.-Gen. A. Babadzhanyan, VV, 1964, No. 8, p. 8.

(skazatsya)."¹ "One must remember" what one seems prone to forget, "that tactical exercises . . . will be profitable only if they are preceded by thorough preparation."²

Correspondingly, it has to be taught that lack of preparation is conducive to failure. "And the yield from the exercise is small because it was prepared in haste."³ "Experience shows that even the simplest training combat does not forgive (*ne proshchat'*) if the commander shows . . . contempt for preparatory work."⁴

"One day Sergeant G. Skoblob reported to me his readiness to conduct an exercise [to be introduced by a lecture of his] and gave me his outline for check-up. I was astonished by its meagerness. And when I learned that the theme of the exercise . . . comprised several serious questions my astonishment became even greater. In answer to my remark I heard: 'I can conduct this exercise without any outline at all . . . (dots in the text--NL).' Then I decided to visit the exercise together with all sergeants of the company. Naturally, there were many defects: no connection with the preceding themes, low methodological level, a lack of sequence in the setting forth of the material, and dryness. For comparison the sergeants then assisted at the exercise led by Sergeant P. Ovchyn. He did not hope that 'everything will fall into place by itself,' but, rather, thoroughly prepared himself. And the exercise proceeded . . . in instructive fashion."⁵

Lack of preparation, it may be recalled, is apt to be succeeded by punishment: "With regard to the company commanded by Captain V. Ponomarev, it became necessary to call off the exercise," and "the officers who had entered upon that exercise unprepared were held strictly accountable."⁶

¹Col. Yu. Baskalov, VV, 1977, No. 4, p. 60.

²Editorial, VV, 1961, No. 1, p. 5.

³Col.-Gen. G. Salmanov, KZ, June 5, 1976.

⁴Navy Capt. V. Tevyanskii, KZ, January 13, 1977.

⁵Capt. V. Khamly, KVS, 1976, No. 7, pp. 56-57.

⁶Lt.-Col. B. Gudymenko, VV, 1975, No. 12, p. 29.

To prepare is sufficiently rejected by Soviet officers for it to become appropriate for the High Command to spell out aspects of that activity which may seem obvious in the West. Thus a military analyst formulates a "rule," namely that "the more complicated an exercise, the more thoroughly must one prepare for it."¹ "The exacting (*trebovatel'nyi*) commander does not allow vehicles to be mounted until he has convinced himself that they are all in good order" ²

How well the "front fighters" of the War prepared! "In the years of the Great Fatherland War many commanders prepared themselves thoroughly before the attack and conducted tactical exercises also with live fire. Precisely at this occasion they tested the realism of their calculations . . . the readiness of the units for decisive action. At these, as it were, rehearsals on the exercise grounds were equipped with engineering works corresponding precisely to the defensive positions of the enemy."³

Overcoming one's subordinates' aversion against preparing should be a major objective of each commander. It is "as a first priority (*v pervuyu ochered'*)" that, according to General Pavlovskii, "the commander must obtain that . . . every officer and sergeant prepare himself well for exercises."⁴

Detours may be productive to this end. Thus we learn about "a seminar which discussed questions of educating communists to a high sense of responsibility for the thorough preparation for a high-quality execution of each summer exercise."⁵

That an officer did *not* show lack of preparation deserves praise. "There was *not* a single case," a military analyst observes about a model platoon commander, "where he prepared himself badly for an exercise."⁶ To a colleague of this writer "it is necessary to note"

¹Col. R. Dukov, VV, 1971, No. 3, p. 41.

²Col. D. Shapovalov, VV, 1965, No. 2, p. 33.

³Col.-Gen. V. Varennikov, VV, 1975, No. 10, p. 20.

⁴VV, 1971, No. 1, p. 7.

⁵Lt.-Col. V. Obukhov, KVS, 1976, No. 10, p. 33.

⁶Lt.-Col. F. Semyanovskii, KZ, April 26, 1977.

about certain named junior commanders that "they *always* prepared themselves thoroughly for exercises."¹ Here is a model unit:

"Every exercise is being prepared thoroughly and in all-sided fashion

And *one other particular feature (osobennost')* is clearly visible in every exercise of the battery"²

"Judging from the fashion in which the subordinates of Major Tomarev attack, it is not difficult to divine: the advance preparation (*predvaritel'naya podgotovka*) of the unit has as always been conducted in full measure (*polnom ob'eme*)."³

"The experience . . . of the staff headed by Lieutenant-Colonel S. Bogomolov" is, to a senior officer "instructive" in that "here planning documents are thoroughly worked out *even before the beginning* of the training year":⁴ this general seems to discover that preparation is pre-paration; so strong is the aversion against concerning oneself with an action "even before its beginning." The rulers' stress on the long-run opposes what they believe to be their subordinates' short horizon.

Section 6: WASTING TIME

"We do not value the minute," observes an officer, "and sometimes we do not even consider half an hour an important amount of time."⁵ There is, a colleague notes, an "aimless waste of training time."⁶ "It is not a secret," according to a senior officer, "that some officers . . . do not always value training time" He adds: "particularly young ones";⁷ so the decades of the regime's counter-efforts have been in vain?

¹Lt.-Col. B. Gudymenko, VV, 1975, No. 12, p. 30.

²Col. E. Babynin, KZ, July 2, 1977.

³Col. V. Izgarshev, KZ, July 15, 1977.

⁴Col.-Gen. V. Yakushin, KZ, April 20, 1977.

⁵Col. E. Datsyuk, KVS, 1969, No. 19, p. 58.

⁶Lt.-Col. L. Muzyka, KZ, October 22, 1976.

For the High Command, of course, presses for economy of time.¹ "One must not," it will be urged with the redundancy marking emphasis, "lose (*teryat'*) even a single minute for nothing (*vpustuyu*)"; "not a single minute should be lost (*propadat'*) for nothing (*zrya*)."² "It is important," General Epishev judges, "to create in every military collective an atmosphere of intolerance towards the nonrational use of time."³

Turned positively, one must "utilize every minute with maximum yield," exhaust "The Capacity of the Training Minute,"⁴ ever "increase the yield of the training minute."⁵

For this one should use all kinds of detours and instruments, "utilize," in General Epishev's words, "all forms and methods of influencing the consciousness of people so as to obtain (*dobivat'sya*) that they . . . intensely value (*dorozhit'*) every hour of training time."⁶ "The manner of beginning the day," an analyst remarks, "physical exercises, parades, assemblies and conferences--all this and much else, it might appear, has no relationship to questions of battle readiness." Yet "all this furnishes many possibilities for developing in people the capacity to count seconds. Accustoming himself to the thought that any activity must be performed as quickly as possible, the fighter creates in himself, as it were, a psychological reserve for the heightening of battle readiness."⁷

This involves, for instance, preparing in advance how to fill any void in time which might unexpectedly appear.

¹Maj.-Gen. G. Komolev, KVS, 1977, No. 5, p. 51.

²Passim, VV, 1976, No. 3, pp. 74-75.

³KVS, 1977, No. 2, p. 18.

⁴Headline, KZ, February 2, 1977.

⁵Maj.-Gen. D. Pavlov, KZ, November 21, 1976.

⁶KVS, 1977, No. 2, p. 18.

⁷Col. A. Kitov, KVS, 1976, No. 2, p. 55.

"At one occasion the unit commanded by Captain Sokolov and Senior Lieutenant Muzychenko, when working through an operation, economized a few minutes. The officers did not have to think how to employ them. For this case they had thought out everything beforehand. A directive was issued according to which a part of the personnel was 'incapacitated.' Now the unit had to act with incomplete personnel."¹

Alas, such conduct is far from dominant. Many forms of wasting time are rampant.

"An officer rises from his chair and begins, as it were, almost from Adam. You will see, he adduces examples known to all, recalls theoretical positions. But what is usually under consideration is a rather narrow, crudely practical question to which the orator addresses himself only at the end of his speech. When not one, but a few such speakers appear, the conference will extend over three to four hours instead of one hour."

"I tried to follow one such conference, as it were, with a chronometer. And then I occupied myself with elementary arithmetic: I multiplied the number of wasted minutes with the number of officers present The resulting number was very substantial! As if six persons from among the gathering had been absent that day from service altogether for unknown reasons. If that had happened, the alarm would immediately have sounded. But as it was, everything was in the order of things."²

The required conduct is obvious, opposed and rare:

"Giving instructions to the technicians . . . takes Major Savchenko precisely, as it was foreseen in the plan of the day, a quarter of an hour. The issue is the imminent work on a missile guidance station. The general part of the session having been finished, the commander asks the technicians of one of the systems to stay so as to give them supplementary instructions.

" -- Was there any point in dismissing the others?--I inquired.

" -- But why should people lose time in vain (*naprasno*) and listen to what has no relation to their work? -- Boris Sidorovich wondered. -- Everybody has business which cannot be deferred."³

¹ Lt.-Col. V. Polezhaev, KZ, March 20, 1977.

² Col. Yu. Galkin, KZ, July 3, 1976.

³ Ibid.

One way of wasting time is to wait.

For instance, to wait for one's turn. "Somebody," an officer observing an exercise note, "was firing, and somebody else smoking, his mind absent (*bezuchastnyi*), waiting his 'turn.'"¹

"This is what results: two officers stand there, discuss something, show something to each other, enter something on the map. But the unit, awaiting instruction, does nothing (*bezdeistvovat*')."²

Some may be waiting because another failed to prepare in good time (see Section 5):

"One of these days I stayed for an exercise . . . with the tank company commanded by Guards Senior Lieutenant P. Kozhevnikov The working through of the theme began with a delay of twelve minutes. And this only because Guards Lieutenant Yu. Kudryavtsev, acting as company commander, did not verify beforehand the readiness of the machines used for military training. They turned out to be unprepared. It became necessary to eliminate the defect before leaving. As a result, there was delay."³

Or one may, not unexpectedly, wait because somebody is, naturally, late:

"A firing exercise. According to the timetable there already should be firing, but I hear no shots. Some soldiers stand around the canteen, others smoke beneath the pines. I inquire with the fighters why they don't exercise.

-- We are waiting for the company commander, explained Junior Sergeant A. Morozyuk.

The waiting continued for a long time One and a half hours of training time were lost. Finally, the company proceeded to the exercise."⁴

¹Col. V. Nagornyi, KZ, January 22, 1977.

²Editorial, VV, 1977, No. 3, p. 8.

³Capt. V. Golovin, KZ, January 21, 1977.

⁴Lt.-Col. A Pimenov, KZ, March 25, 1977.

"It turned out that the motorized riflemen had trained to attack in difficult conditions only for a little bit more than three hours out of six. The rest of the time was spent on an 'easy' march into the training area and back, on waiting for the officer in charge of the tank platoon who had, incomprehensibly, been detained somewhere"¹

When an editorial of the ground forces' monthly wants to illustrate a situation in which "defects appear," the event which comes to mind is that "somebody is late in beginning the attack . . . arrives late in the indicated area and so forth."²

Acting, one may be slow (or, going to the other extreme, be "nervously" hasty--a minor, but important theme I shall not treat). What does it matter, personnel seems to ask, at precisely what point in time a certain objective will have been attained? "One can't say," General Pavlovskii concedes, "that our regimental commanders have no plans," yet "they often lack . . . in directedness: . . . it is not apparent what must be obtained within a month."³ "Slowly, without elan (*ogon'ko*) went the work."⁴ It seems worth recalling that operating time *costs*. "One must," an editorial of the military daily demands, "learn to value every hour of training, of flight, of march." For "their conduct entails material expenditures which are not small--expenditures of ammunition, of fuel, of motorized vehicles, etc."⁵

In fact, and as we already know, according to the Authorities, "one must learn to value" even the "hour" which seems least important:

¹Capt. V. Goryavin, KZ, February 2, 1977. Dots in the text.

²Editorial, VV, 1977, No. 3, p. 7.

³VV, 1971, No. 1, p. 4.

⁴Passim, e.g., VV, 1967, No. 3, p. 62.

⁵KZ, March 31, 1977.

"An extremely dense exercise was held. Completing it, the fighters moved towards the barracks. They went slowly with a kind of unhasty looseness. It seemed incredible that just a few minutes ago they were active with enviable energy What had happened?

. . . . But the exercise is over--the commander of the platoon pronounced calmly.

So that is it! Thus it appears that the capacity to save seconds is required only in exercises, but that there is no sin in despising minutes once one has left class or training grounds?"¹

In contrast to such aspirations, personnel may delay acting, perhaps until "an indeterminate moment (*na neopredelennyi srok*)."² "If, for instance, the unit has taken up a position for defense, not all soldiers begin immediately to dig a trench."³

There may be "little effort at the start, and the hope that there will be time enough (*uspet'*) to make it up (*naverstat'*)."⁴

"In the squadron it was believed that there was enough time ahead so as to fulfill the plan They did not make haste to begin night flights."⁵

"Let them wait, there will be time enough later": "we hear," an observer notes, "these words all too often."⁶ "There is no doubt," a senior officer admits, "this is a seductive thought: when you have not done something, immediately you justify yourself, you calm yourself by saying that you will make up for what you have neglected later."⁷ "On the training ground where Guards Senior Lieutenant M. Matveev was in command of a platoon, the tankmen, for instance,

¹Capt. A. Mitronov, KZ, July 20, 1977.

²Passim, e.g., KZ, March 31, 1977.

³Col. I. Belov, KVS, 1975, No. 19, p. 28.

⁴Passim, e.g., KZ, January 21, 1977.

⁵Lt.-Col. A. Zarubin, KZ, November 20, 1977.

⁶Col. Yu. Galkin, KZ, July 3, 1976.

⁷Lt.-Gen. N. Mil'chenko, KZ, March 31, 1977.

fulfilled the norms of protection against weapons of mass destruction without a tactical background (*fon*). No actions of the 'enemy' were indicated." Now "why did the platoon commander train his subordinates in oversimplified fashion? Senior Guards Lieutenant Matveev explained that . . . there still was much time for the exercising of norms against a tactical background. There will be time to make it up."¹ And then there are officers "who assume that all errors tolerated in the period of . . . preparation can be made up for in the . . . exercise itself."² It is only the *Red Star's* headline which is sceptical: "But Will There Be Time to Make Up?"³ "Will one succeed in adjusting it later?"⁴

Thus hope is put in "storming (*sturmovshchina*)" during "the concluding stage," for instance of training. One acts so that it "becomes necessary, in the final stage of training, to solve a series of questions in emergency (*avral'nyi*) manner."⁵ A manner high in cost, low in yield. Then "results are obtained by an excessive expenditure of motor and ammunition resources": this is "making it up on the run (*na begu*), blind driving (*nataskivanie*)."⁶ "Today," a captain is reported to have told a Party meeting, "I was with a platoon . . . where the officer brought himself and the personnel to perspiration, exhausted the personnel. And why? Well, because in yesterday's activities he did not prepare himself. I was there and saw everything with my own eyes. The soldiers were sitting and imitating depth of attention. They did not learn anything new, it was simply collective time wasted. And then, in order to make up for what had been neglected, the commander had to drive his subordinates today."⁷

¹Capt. V. Golovin, KZ, January 21, 1977.

²Col. G. Moiseev, VV, 1975, No. 6, p. 64.

³January 21, 1977.

⁴KVS, 1976, No. 4, p. 6.

⁵Capt. V. Golovin, KZ, January 21, 1977.

⁶Col. A. Stibnev and Maj. B. Karpov, KZ, May 18, 1976.

⁷Col. A. Stibnev, KZ, September 3, 1976.

The final spurt is apt to come too late. "In order to execute with such precision a march of the entire regiment," an observer muses about a perfect performance, "it would not have sufficed to work strenuously only during the days preceding the exercise." Rather, this "required the constant and unremitting (*neoslabnyi*) attention to these questions in the course of the whole training year."¹ But in the Komsomol meeting of a unit "the question how the fighters could keep their word was considered only at a moment when it was perhaps already late to speak of that."²

Delaying is apt to entail being behind schedule (*opozdanie*). That is expected:

"In one exercise, I happened to be the involuntary witness of a conversation between two officers.

" -- The attack is set for 12 o'clock.

" -- Well, that means, look for it at 15 o'clock.

"And this was said so simply, in so natural a fashion that I could only be amazed.

" . . .

"Indeed, the attack of the tank battalion commanded by Major E. Kuz'min had been set for 12 o'clock. For that moment, commanders had put tasks to their subordinates, prepared the battle, detailed time limits. And the personnel waited for the signal However, one hour passed by, then a second, and it did not come. Then it was announced: the attack is changed to 13 hours. But that moment passed also, and the long-awaited signal still did not come. Finally there was a new announcement--be ready for 14 o'clock. But in reality, it was only at 16 o'clock that the unit began to move."³

¹Lt.-Col. V. Kholodul'kin, KZ, April 4, 1976.

²Col. I. Maksimov, KZ, April 12, 1977.

³Capt. M. Trushchenkov, VV, 1974, No. 10, pp. 30-31. Dots in the text.

Being late is expected because it is held to be trivial:

"The battalion of Major E. Kuz'min, for instance, did not receive the signal to attack [at the set hour] only because the training field was not ready. But, one must suppose, the commander knew what was necessary for this purpose and by what time. Why was this not reflected in his plans . . . ? The impression arises that somebody entertained the thought: being late by an hour or two does not mean anything."¹

Then it becomes worthwhile to explain how punctuality is pertinent to success. "Success," in simulated combat, it may be said, "will depend in not a small measure on strict conformity to the established regime of movement, on arriving at starting and intermediate lines precisely at the times foreseen."²

Yet punctuality is something to marvel at:

"The aircraft arrived at the indicated line on the dot (*sekunda v sekundu*).

--It is possible to verify one's watches by the aircraft--the officers on the hill remarked with satisfaction.

And so it was with every flight. If the plan indicated that the bombers will strike at 11:07, this meant that the noise of explosions occurred not at 11:06 or 11:08, but precisely 7 minutes within the twelfth hour."³

A combination of efficiency and speed is not expected, but extraordinary:

"Precisely at the indicated hour . . . Captain V. Prokhorov appears in the office of Major Savchenko. Without any prefatory remarks, he expounds the essence of the matter briefly and precisely. One feels immediately that Major Savchenko requires an extreme economy of words from his subordinates. Having put a few questions, Boris Sidorovich gives instructions and dismisses the officer. The whole conversation occupied three minutes."⁴

¹ Ibid.

² Col. V. Evdokimov, KZ, June 12, 1976.

³ Col. V. Izgarshev, KZ, July 16, 1977.

⁴ Col. Yu. Galkin, KZ, July 3, 1976.

Section 7: SCATTERING RESOURCES

Ordinary human beings, in the High Command's view, find it difficult to discern which is the "main link" in the complex chain of events surrounding them, and then to concentrate resources on "seizing" that link, thereby maximally affecting the entire chain. A commander in an offensive is believed to be tempted to remain below the optimal degree of concentration of forces on a narrow sector of the front so as to break through there; he is thought apt to err in the direction of "distributing" his forces too "evenly" (*ravnomernost'*) over the entire front. Similarly, there is, to the High Command, a disposition in other military situations to "scatter (*raspylyat'*)" resources over too many objectives. "The communists of the squadron," we hear, "raised the question at the Party meeting . . . whether in the summer program . . . certain airmen should not be sent on leave and one should not concentrate fully on the teaching of the others; resources for the instruction, limited in any case, ought not to be scattered" But "unfortunately this proposal was not accepted."¹ All too often one has to note "the officer's inability to see the *main* task of the month, the week, the day."²

With "scattering" productivity falls. When the modesty of his yield is pointed out to an officer beset by this vice, he may "react with badly concealed offense" and recall that "I am on my feet the entire day," "and suddenly this accusation!" Indeed, "from the morning on such an officer verified the fulfillment of the timetable of the day, was present at firing exercises. Then he went to the training grounds where one of the companies exercised driving tanks. The same day the commander verified the preparation of the daily duty detail, the organization of the food supply and occupied himself with other matters. As we see . . . he did not stay in one place." Yet "one does not feel in his activity the capacity to concentrate his attention on the basic questions, on the unsolved problems"; he does not know how to "choose the principal links in the chain of numerous tasks."³

¹ Lt.-Col. L. Chuiko, KZ, August 27, 1976.

² VV, 1973, No. 7, p. 55.

³ Ibid.

Hence General Pavlovskii's stress on a commander "not scattering his efforts."¹ "The commander," an anonymous authority recalls, "must know how *not* to drown in an abundance of facts, not to scatter himself in petty details, but to concentrate attention on the essential"; his must be "the capacity to find the main link,"² to "Press upon the Principal (*delat' upor na glavnom*)."³

The High Command, we perceive, is not only afraid of its subordinates paying too little attention to *melochi*, details (see Section 4), but also of their being too much concerned with unselected specifics. This does not, as some observers might judge, add up to nothing; rather it shows a lack of confidence in personnel finding the right middle.

¹VV, 1971, No. 1, p. 7.

²Editorial, VV, 1972, No. 6, p. 2.

³A title, VV, 1971, No. 11, p. 41.

PART II. ABSORPTION IN SELF

Section 8: LAWLESSNESS

"To achieve (*dobit'sya*) that...subordinates fulfill orders faultlessly," an officer remarks in standard fashion, "is not an easy task."¹

Then one may not try. "Some officers are concerned with obedience to regulations only in general fashion (*v obshchem i tselom*)," which, we now know (see Section 4), means: ineffectively. They are "preoccupied with order in the unit only in intermittent drives (*po kampan-eiskii*)."² In a unit "the contempt for the timetable of the day" is such that "personnel have already taken it for granted that a scheduled exercise may or may not occur."³ Violations of rules and orders may be so natural that one may not even think of this aspect of life when it comes to probing the mystery of a unit's low results. When "in the unit commanded by Major V. Prikhod'ko, many officers were on duty from morning to evening, but the desired yield did not accrue," "we" from the senior commander's staff "discovered what the matter was": "we advised the commander to attempt seriously to have regulations followed, to achieve that everybody in full measure comply with the obligations laid upon him by regulations."⁴

Obedience to a superior may be conditional on his propriety:

"The officer...promised to award Privates E. Barta and M. Mad'yarov a short leave if they made an appropriate effort...But then Lieutenant N. Menyailo did not keep his promise. The result was not long in showing itself. Private Barta, for instance, seemed literally transformed. Where had the always restrained, calm and disciplined fighter disappeared? He became rude, violated regulations."⁵

¹Col. A. Nedasugov KVS, 1966, No. 5, p. 43.

²Vice-Admiral M. Ozimov, KVS, 1976, No. 9, p. 42.

³Col. E. Babynin, KZ, January 29, 1977.

⁴Col. I. Baishev, KVS, 1973, No. 17, p. 37.

⁵Capt. I. Kikeshev, VV, 1976, No. 7, p. 63. Dots in the text.

Feelings of subordinates in favor of obeying the law may be weak. "This," an officer may surmise about some measure, "will help developing . . . a positive attitude toward complying with the law."¹

Even the conscious belief in a duty to obey the law may have its limitations. "No objective reasons (*prichina*)," General Pavlovskii believes it useful to recall, "can serve to justify violating the established order and rules."²

Looking from time to time towards the utopia in which law-abid-
ingness would be an "inner need," the High Command more often reassures
itself by recalling the resources of deterrence.

Without fear of punishment, rules and orders will be neglected. One can issue many good orders concerning the reenforcement of discipline, it may be said, but if their fulfillment is not verified, they will remain only on paper. "An absolute condition of moral-political and psychological preparation," affirms an officer (making his statement less crude than if he had replaced these two nouns and three adjectives by a single word, obedience) "is the profound assimilation by personnel of the seriousness of the principle (sic) that punishment for a violation of laws and orders is inevitable."³

Where threats are infeasible, conscience, alas, has to fill the void, uncertainly. Fighters of many specialties, one may recall, often and at length fulfill their combat obligations in conditions in which it is not the commander, but only their own conscience which *can* exercise surveillance over them:

"Many fighters [in the air force], above all interceptor crews fulfill their combat tasks independently. That is why (*voe pochemu*) one must create self-discipline in the aviators, based on high consciousness."⁴

¹Col. I. Gordienko, KVS, 1975, No. 22, p. 55.

²VV, 1971, No. 1, p. 6.

³Col. I. Gordienko, KVS, 1975, No. 22, p. 55.

⁴Chief Marshal of Aviation P. Kutakhov, KVS, 1975, No. 1, p. 32.

That violations do damage may appear a point to be stressed. It is "an army experience of many years," a general officer declares, which "gives me the right to affirm the following: there is nothing more dangerous for the perfecting of the combat capability of the troops than a light-minded attitude towards the execution of orders of senior commanders."¹ Particular instances to illustrate the law may not be amiss. "It is sufficient, for instance, for an interceptor pilot to show...lack of regard (*nebrechnost'*) toward the fulfillment of the order of ground control...for the consequences of such a lack of discipline to be extremely serious."²

That discipline fosters success also calls for exemplifying. "Let us," an officer proposes, "take as an instance the battery commanded by Major V. Bol'shakov." There missile men "have crossed difficult frontiers of achievement." Now "I am convinced that their high results in service and training have had as their condition above all the fact that in the unit an atmosphere of profound respect towards regulations, their punctual fulfillment has been created and skillfully maintained."³ "According to the results of the past year of training our surface-to-air missile regiment," the same officer reports, "conquered anew the rating of excellent... Many commanders...have asked me to tell them the secret of success. Speaking candidly, it is not easy to answer this question. Battle readiness, the organization of training, [socialist] competition, Party political work, the struggle for the further reinforcement of military discipline, the moral perfecting of the fighters--all these are most important elements, not one of which can be omitted." Still, "there exists in my view a main link securing the successful solution of the most difficult tasks. Which is that link? The precise fulfillment by every serviceman of the obligations foreseen by regulations."⁴

¹ Lt.-Gen. V. Ivanov, VV, 1975, No. 3, p. 34.

² Lt.-Col. V. Obukhov, KVS, 1976, No. 10, p. 36.

³ Lt.-Col. S. Vasil'chenko, KZ, January 20, 1976.

⁴ Ibid.

Hence the stress on the requirement of conformity; the rejection of exceptions: "even rare (*otdel'nyi*) cases of misusing their powers by officers, generals and admirals," Marshal Grechko insisted, "are absolutely inadmissible." "It is important," General Pavlovskii advances, "that orders and instructions be based on strict conformity with Soviet laws, with the requirements of regulations."¹

It is something to marvel at when lawlessness is absent. Look at Navy Captain V. Prokopov: "he is particularly exacting (*v yskatel'nyi*) towards himself--punctual in the fulfillment of his service obligations, of the daily timetable. And he is incessantly concerned that a similar relationship to service be the norm of conduct of every subordinate."² One may portray an officer thus: "Captain A. Korolev, a *partisan* of the strict fulfillment of what regulations require."³ "At the present time," one reports with seeming pride, "there are in the battalion no deviations from the timetable."⁴ "The entire daily life of this military collective," two officers claim for their ship, "proceeds under the sign of the unconditional fulfillment of obligations undertaken."⁵ "Units whose life is organized in strict conformity to the requirements of military regulations," a general officer exults, "are not rare (*nemalo*)."⁶

But it takes high, protracted and steady effort to get a unit to such hardly credible perfection and to keep it there. It is "through common effort" that "we, the commanders of the units and of the subunits, the Party and the Komsomol achieved that the absolute majority (sic) of officers and sergeants punctually fulfilled their service obligations."⁷ To be sure, "it is much easier to

¹VV, 1971, No. 1, p. 2.

²Vice-Admiral M. Ozimov, KVS, 1976, No. 9, p. 41.

³Editorial, VV, 1968, No. 11, p. 4.

⁴Col. N. Meleshkin, KVS, 1975, No. 16, p. 45.

⁵Navy Capts. P. Ablamonov and V. Polivanov, KVS, 1975, No. 20, p. 42.

⁶Maj.-Gen. A. Zyryanov, VV, 1976, No. 10, p. 55.

⁷Lt.-Col. A. Kol'tsov, VV, 1976, No. 7, p. 19.

realize some 'high-sounding (*zvonkyi*)' measure than to struggle day by day so as to achieve that soldiers... unquestioningly obey every order of sergeants."¹

This may also be accomplished in indirect fashion. Thus it is, for instance, "a thorough individual selection for detail duty according to the professional and moral qualities of soldiers" which "makes it possible to prevent accidents, the violation of regulations."²

* * * * *

The requirement to obey is to do all I can so that I *and you* obey. "One of the principles of the new Regulations," the Chief Military Prosecutor explains at the time of their entering into force, "is that of the exactingness (*trebovatel'nost'*) of the commander." That is, "the commander... is obliged to require of the subordinates obedience to the laws and regulations, the fulfillment of service obligations and of the orders of superiors."³ It is "in the first place (*v pervuyu ochered'*)" that, according to General Pavlovskii, "the commander must... obtain (always the intense and protracted effort of *dobit'sya* - NL) that all personnel fulfil the day's timetable exactly."⁴ "The very first (*perveishii*) duty of the commander," the military daily agrees, "is to require... obedience to military discipline and to regulations."⁵

But in fact "a large fraction of violations of the law are committed... with the calculation that those around the violators will not interfere (*nevmeshatel'stvo*), in the hope that one's comrade will not 'hand over' a comrade, will not 'let him down.'"⁶

¹ Sr. Lt. A. Smirnov, KZ, January 13, 1976.

² Maj.-Gen. I. Minenko and Col. V. Stepanchikov, KVS, 1975, No. 3, p. 39.

³ Col.-Gen. A. Gornyi, KZ, October 24, 1976.

⁴ VV, 1971, No. 1, p. 7.

⁵ Editorial, KZ, December 3, 1976.

⁶ Col. I. Gordienko, KVS, 1976, No. 17, p. 37.

Indeed, "exactingness" may be the stance of just certain commanders, and intermittent as well as selective to boot. Yet, the High Command recalls, "exactingness [of the commander] incites to active doings *when* it issues from *all* commanders, manifests itself *daily* and is applied to *all* categories of men in service."¹ In the Chief Military Prosecutor's more explicit formulation, "exactingness [of superiors concerning the conformity to regulations and orders by subordinates] is efficacious *only when* it is permanent and uniform towards all subordinates."²

But commanders may not even rise to capricious exactingness; they may limit themselves to a show of it, "react weakly." "When a soldier committed a violation," we hear, "Lieutenant Zelentsov limited himself to general considerations."³

One is apt to do even less than that: simply "pass by (*prokhodit' mimo*)" the violation, as an "observer," "without concern," with "indifference" (see Section 13), "unattentive," "closing one's eyes" or "looking at everything through fingers in front of one's eyes;" then, one will "keep silence" and "not report." "Did Ensign A. Krasavin and Sergeant V. Smirnov not see how some drivers... behaved carelessly in serving their machines? They did see that. But they *did nothing* to improve the situation."⁴ "Not so long ago in the unit commanded by Officer Naumov there were cases of soldiers going AWOL, of drunkenness and other violations. What is the most saddening thing, the collective *reacted in no way* to these events."⁵ "Lieutenant Mikhilov *paid no attention* to the numerous violations committed in the execution of tactical procedures."⁶ While "in one unit...gross violations were not rare, this *did not provoke any disquiet* in the Party committee. It was *reconciled* to the defects."⁷

¹ Editorial, KZ, December 3, 1976.

² Col.-Gen. A. Gornyi, KZ, October 24, 1976.

³ Col. V. Kostylev, VV, 1966, No. 7, p. 50.

⁴ Capt. V. Matveev, KZ, April 2, 1977.

⁵ Maj.-Gen. I. Pobezhimov, VV, 1966, No. 1, p. 51.

⁶ Sr. Lt. V. Mechkov, KZ, September 14, 1976.

⁷ Lt.-Gen. F. Mazhaev, VV, 1967, No. 8, p. 48.

The more habitual the violation, the more natural it may seem. "Transgressing the timetable, the commander violated the proper succession of his subordinates' exercises." Now "how did the senior commander react to this? One may say not at all... Major Yu. Dubinin simply noted that similar arbitrary acts (*vol'nost'*) had already been observed to occur earlier with Vinogradov."¹

Beyond not reacting to a violation, one may act in favor of it, "conniving" with it (*popustitel'stvo*), "covering" it (*pokrovitel'stvo*).

"In the troops," a general officer observes, "there are cases when a justly punished subordinate finds sympathy and even support."²

"In the company where Captain A. Solov'ev is the commander's representative for political affairs, Private A. Vershinin went AWOL. Solov'ev recommended to the platoon commander Lieutenant I. Vasil'zhenko to discuss the violations of the soldier in a meeting of the personnel. 'Well, let's discuss it,' the platoon commander decided and did not go to any further trouble. He announced the time of the meeting and occupied himself with other, as it seemed to him more important matters. Great then was his astonishment when the soldiers in their speeches began to sympathize with Vershinin, trying to find attenuating circumstances for him. Private Vershinin is a good comrade, said one of those who spoke. Of course, he was at fault, but to whom does that not happen? Let us forgive Vershinin; this meeting will be a good lesson for him. What kind of a lesson can it be for him? said Lieutenant Vasil'zhenko, calling for a principled orientation. You are protecting the violator of discipline! But by that time it was already difficult to influence the course of the meeting. Its tone was set by the partisans of Vershinin,³ while the activists of the Komsomol remained silent."

¹ Col. E. Babynin, KZ, January 29, 1977.

² Maj.-Gen. I. Mednikov, VV, 1966, No. 4, p. 52.

³ Maj. V. Kovtun, KZ, March 26, 1977.

When another officer described by the same observer did go to pains in preparing a meeting intended to condemn a violator of discipline, and though everybody then spoke correctly, afterwards one of the violator's peers approached him to say: "Don't be offended, Vadim. At the meeting I spoke according to instructions and criticized you only for the record (*tak dlya poryadka*)."¹

The violator's accomplices may not be his peers, but rather the very superiors required to check up on whether he lives up to requirements. Here is a unit which, not unexpectedly (see Section 19), is falling from protracted excellence:

"The inspectors who often came to this unit... did not note the 'small' defects to which the unit gradually became accustomed. In other cases the inspectors did observe the imperfections in the work of the unit, but immediately consoled themselves by considerations such as these: 'But who does not make mistakes? And they do fulfil the norms. And in general there is much more that is good in the division...'"²

The consequences of tolerance towards small defects are apt to be huge, according to well-known beliefs perhaps distinctively stressed by the Soviet rulers.³

A bad habit is rapidly formed (and a good one quickly broken: see Section 16). "If," an officer reported by an analyst points out, "the soldier executes a certain procedure a few times in mistaken fashion, the mistake becomes a habit. And then try to remove it subsequently..."⁴

Tiny badness is apt to start an avalanche. "As common wisdom has it, everything begins with a trifle." "Mistakes," an officer describes a typical sequence, "grew like snowballs."⁵ "It is sufficient," warns

¹Ibid.

²Col. O. Pogrebtsov, KZ, July 1, 1976. Dots in the text.

³See Herbert Goldhamer, op. cit., p. 144.

⁴Col. R. Dukov, VV, 1971, No. 3, p. 40. Dots in the text.

⁵Col. V. Ivanov, VV, 1976, No. 12, p. 52.

another, "to weaken one's attention to questions of discipline even for a short time...so as to threaten all that has been created by prolonged and arduous labor."¹ "Tolerance (*terpimost'*) towards 'trifles'," a general officer recalls, "engenders bigger violations of rules."²

Not only is the violator bound to be infected by the "tolerance" shown him, there is apt to be an epidemic:

"Once Officer O. Ermakov violated the rules for utilizing aircraft equipment and the required sequence of operations in a flying task. Instead of openly and honestly acknowledging his negligence..., he remained silent. This lack of principle in the evaluation of his own fault led to analogous violations soon being committed by other pilots."³

Hence the requirement to "suppress [the bad] in its very embryo;" to show "intolerance (*neterpimost'*)," "irreconcilableness (*neprimirmost'*)" towards any undesirable conduct.

Even when one's heart urges one to make an exception:

"Lieutenant V. Korablev was considered a man addicted to service (*sluzhbist*) in the best sense of the word. He was strict, made allowances neither to himself nor to his subordinates, did not tolerate chumminess (*panibratstvo*). Soldiers and sergeants were proud of their commander. His word was law for them. And the platoon commanded by the Lieutenant was an excellent one.

"One day, returning from an official journey, the officer had an accident. This was not far from the training ground of his unit. He would not have escaped disaster had Private A. Golubev not found himself near. He hurried towards the officer and carried him to a safe place in his arms.

¹ Lt.-Col. V. Kholodul'kin, KZ, April 19, 1977.

² Maj.-Gen. A. Zyryanov, VV, 1976, No. 10, p. 56.

³ Col. V. Podobedov, KVS, 1971, No. 18, p. 44.

"Afterwards it turned out that the soldier was then AWOL and saw the officer by chance. In another case, the Lieutenant would of course have punished the violator of discipline, but in this circumstance, he forgave him, remembering that Golubev had saved his life.

"If before that moment that soldier had known that in the platoon nobody could commit even the smallest violation without cost, now, sensing the indulgence, he became undisciplined (*razvyaznyi*). Not restraining himself further, he committed ever grosser violations of discipline."¹

Given the disposition to be "tolerant" towards violators, those who are not thereby give proof not of expected normalcy, but of surprising excellence. "They do not leave a single violation of subordinates without counteraction," one may say of them with sober praise, "they do not pass by the smallest deviation from regulations."²

To sacrifice personal relations to duty is heroic:

"In one unit Junior Sergeant T. Egorov was on guard duty...The second year privates M. Khramtsov and R. Kapetin decided to test him and left the unit of their own accord. In fact, they put him before this choice: either to hide their violation and as the phrase goes, enter into cahoots with them (*voiti k nim v doverie*), or to carry them out into pure water (*vyvesti ikh na chistuyu vodu*) by reporting to the commander what had happened. Egorov took no account of personal inconveniences (*neudobstvo*)..."³

The sergeant showed what the High Command always hopes for and is never sure of, *printsipial'nost'*, a conduct giving priority to principle: to make "the choice between duty and personal interest, principle and buddy (*priyatel'skyi*) relations," General Epishev admits in 1977 with surprising mildness, is to resolve a "complicated moral situation."⁴

¹Col. A. Petrov, VV, 1969, No. 5, pp. 58-59.

²Maj.-Gen. A. Zyryanov, VV, 1976, No. 10, p. 58.

³Col. I. Gordienko, KVS, 1976, No. 17, p. 36.

⁴KVS, 1977, No. 2, p. 20.

Section 9: COMPLACENCY

The High Command discerns among its subordinates a disposition to exaggerate their strength, an inclination which it designates with several strong words. The penchant to "present the desirable as existing (*vydat' zhelaemoe za deistvitel'noe*)"¹--the tendency, in Party language, to have "subjective" factors dominate "objective" ones--leads to *blagodushie* (literally, the bliss of the soul), *samodovol'stvo* (literally, pleasure in oneself), that is, complacency, smugness. This may reach *samoobol'shchenie*, delusions about oneself, and express itself in boasting (*samokhvalenie*, *bakhval'stvo*, *khvastovstvo*).

This inclination may be set off by little. "At the first, often even insignificant success," a peer discerns about such an officer, "he begins to be immensely delighted with it, to shout that things are going very well."² "Some successes have been obtained," it will then be in order to observe, "but it is early to triumph."³

All the more will a substantial favorable record turn one's head; in particular, make one underestimate what one's head has to do to ensure further advantage. Thus Navy Captain of the Second Rank A. Shakun, preparing himself for a simulated underwater duel "did not regard it as necessary to consider several variants of combat." Rather, "basing himself on his experience and intuition," he "selected the case most likely in his opinion and worked out decisions for it alone." However, "in reality the situation turned out to be more complicated. And then Captain of the Second Rank A. Shakun was unable to reorient himself quickly." Thus "he had evidently overestimated his possibilities." Alas, "it happens that several successes in combat, obtained without especially difficult calculations, create in the commander the illusion that naval combat is easy, that it is not necessary to prepare it thoroughly."⁴ (See Section 5.)

¹Passim, e.g., KVS, 1976, No. 4, p. 34.

²Col. V. Makhalov, KVS, 1966, No. 1, p. 25.

³Maj. A. Vzun'ko, KZ, January 27, 1977.

⁴Capt. of the First Rank V. Tevyanskii, KZ, January 13, 1977.

A commander absorbed in self will forget about the enemy. "The APCs conducted by Sergeant V. Gromov and Private A. Mukhitdinov attacked," an observer may note, "paying no attention to the fire of the 'enemy.'"¹

"The units went to the attack without taking account of the fire of the 'enemy.' In real battle, this would have led to large losses."²

"The battalion has broken through the defense of the 'enemy' and continues to develop its success," reported Captain K. Kryzhnyi over the radio. Yet behind the tanks there remained targets unstruck, and among them antitank weapons unsuppressed. Hence in real combat the optimistic report of the battalion commander would hardly have been given. To 'break' the defense of a strong 'enemy' is much more difficult than it appeared in the exercise."³

If not altogether overlooked, the enemy may conveniently be judged weak. Describing the penchant to dispense with camouflage, an officer remarks that "particularly the night plays a bad turn on the careless ones. Some soldiers proceed to their positions upright. The majority, of course, know that contemporary means of intelligence allow to see as much at night as during the day." But then "they hope 'on the off-chance (*na avos'*)'"': perhaps the 'enemy' is not appropriately equipped"⁴ "In the course of exercises," a general officer remarks, "the opposed side is sometimes presented as . . . not striving to obtain victory"⁵ "One must not," an analyst finds it useful to demand, "represent the 'enemy' as a simpleton who is ready to cede victory to us easily, who does not take counter-measures"⁶ For there is no such 'enemy' who would be waiting passively while one demolishes him (*razobyt*)."⁷

¹ Lt.-Col. B. Gudymenko, VV, 1974, No. 12, p. 51.

² Col. E. Grebenshchikov, KZ, July 29, 1977.

³ Lt.-Col. A. Shpin', KZ, January 22, 1977.

⁴ Col. V. Potastov, KZ, September 11, 1975. Dots in the text.

⁵ Maj.-Gen. I. Podoved, VV, 1976, No. 3, p. 63.

⁶ Col. A. Vorov'ev, KZ, December 27, 1974.

⁷ Lt.-Commander D. chumak, KZ, July 22, 1977.

"The error, as it turned out in the analysis of the exercise, consisted in this that Lieutenant Maiorov did not expect active counteraction of the opposing side. He hoped that the crew of the 'foreign' aircraft would merely sketch (*oboznachit'*) a maneuver for the sake of appearance and that there would be no particular difficulty in attacking it."¹

The error of self-infatuation may also be to overestimate one's own capabilities. "Sometimes orders are given when it is perfectly clear that it is impossible to fulfill them within the time indicated."² "In exercises it still happens," an anonymous authority observes, "that commanders . . . ask of their artillery and aviation tasks which are clearly beyond their forces." Thus "in a recent exercise the unit commanded by . . . E. Nikitin was stopped in the course of advance by the fire of the 'enemy's' antitank weapons from the slopes of a commanding height. The commander ordered the artillery batteries to suppress them, and the company to attack the strongpoint on the height after five minutes. He did not take account of the fact that the artillerists would be unable to fulfill their task within such a brief time."³ "In exercises," the same authority discerns, "there are still cases where, for instance, a battalion commander, ordering the sappers allocated to him to create a passage through a minefield of the 'enemy,' allows them much less time than is required for that. As a result, the attacking unit is arrested by the obstacle, the speed of the attack sinks."⁴ "Commanders are obliged to take meticulous account of the fact that personnel needs time for the locating of targets . . . and the opening of fire."⁵

Hence it becomes appropriate for General Pavlovskii to teach "exactness brings the wished-for results only when the tasks set are within the capacity (*posil'nyi*) of the executants,"⁶ and to insist that "orders and instructions . . . be based on the capabilities of subordinates."⁷

¹Lt.-Col. V. Shtan'ko, KZ, March 25, 1977.

²Editorial, KVS, 1966, No. 4, p. 6.

³Editorial, VV, 1976, No. 6, p. 3.

⁴Editorial, VV, 1968, No. 6, p. 5.

⁵Maj. I. Slyuserenko, VV, 1977, No. 5, p. 57.

⁶VV, 1971, No. 1, p. 5.

⁷Loc. cit., p. 2.

Disregarding the limitations of one's capabilities is, however, a penchant from which the High Command itself is not immune. Commenting on the citation accompanying a decoration, a peer of the beneficiary explains that "practically, this means that there cannot be any condition in which Lieutenant Colonel Brakin would not successfully accomplish any (*lyubyyi*) task."¹

It is against this background that we should place the High Command's stress on "a critical attitude toward the results of one work,"² on "modesty," on an "evaluation of what has been attained" which is "strict," "principled."³ "For many units and ships," one may advance with at least feigned relief, "it has become a law: the results of military work must be evaluated with heightened exactingness."⁴ The High Command never ceases to recall that the future "victory" will have to be one over an "enemy" who is "strong, technically well equipped and crafty (*kovarnyi*)."

Yet the High Command is also aware that a "trait" such as "an objective evaluation of what has been attained," "does not develop by itself in the officer's character;" "it...does not suddenly appear." Rather, "senior commanders must lavish care (*zabotit'sya*) on it."⁵

Section 10: PRETENSE

From infatuation with self there is a short path to *ochkovtiratel'stvo*, eyewash, to window-dressing (*paradnost'*, *pokazukha*), an orientation on "an effect which is not real but apparent."⁶ The High Command,

¹ Lt.-Col. S. Grivanov, KZ, September 6, 1975.

² Passim, e.g., KVS, 1976, No. 7, p. 45.

³ Passim, e.g., KVS, 1976, No. 1, p. 60.

⁴ Editorial, KVS, 1976, No. 22, p. 5.

⁵ Maj.-Gen. V. Platov, KVS, 1976, No. 1, p. 60.

⁶ Cf. Herbert Goldhamer, op. cit., pp. 122-123, 150.

despite and because of its stress on rating and surveillance, suspects and expects much "covering up (*ukrivatel'stvo*) of negative events," "painting over (*zamazat'*) of defects," their "hiding." Then of course also "the artificial enhancement of estimates," "the striving to embellish (*priukrasit'*) the real situation." "Some persons in military service," an observer notes about his colleagues, "feel hemmed in by honesty as if it were a shoe that does not fit."¹

Such are the energy and skill deployed in these enterprises that they may succeed. As to "young officers who strive to pretend that what is desirable has been realized," "they do it," a peer judges, "in so artful a manner that the senior command is left with no choice but to put them up as examples for others."² Still, General Pavlovskii denies that he may be taken for a ride: "such a businesslike atmosphere, he remarks about a model regiment, "naturally cannot be created merely for show, as it is sometimes attempted before the arrival of senior commanders."³

So widespread and acceptable is pretense that it may not seem odd to explain its immorality. "The fighter," one may concede, "is obliged to deceive the enemy." And yet, "he does not have the moral right to speak the untruth to his comrades in arms, to deceive his commander."⁴ With particular regard to "attaching to one's uniform signs of others' glory: 'excellent soldier (*otlichnik*) of the Soviet Army,' 'specialist of the second class' and so forth," it seems worthwhile to explain that "a sign of soldierly glory must correspond precisely to the merits of the soldier himself."⁵ As every other avoidance of evil, this "does not come by itself." Rather, as General Pavlovskii recalls, "the commander is obliged to educate his subordinates, with every step he takes, in the spirit of...crystalline honesty."⁶

¹Col. I. Gordienko, KVS, 1976, No. 17, p. 39.

²Capt. I. Kikeshev, VV, 1976, No. 7, p. 64.

³VV, 1971, No. 1, p. 3.

⁴Col. I. Gordienko, KVS, 1976, No. 17, p. 39.

⁵Ibid.

⁶KZ, January 10, 1976.

Section 11: WARRING BY ONESELF

When "a commander of a motorized rifle battalion did not organize . . . collaboration with the tank men," a military leader observes: "And here they go 'warring' by themselves."¹ There is, as Herbert Goldhamer has pointed out, according to the High Command's account of its forces "a tendency on the part of persons . . . to attend only to their own . . . duties during a . . . exercise . . . not to pay enough attention to the battle as a whole";² "cases," as an officer puts it, "where particular soldiers recently drafted, when fulfilling a common task together with comrades, orient themselves exclusively on their own possibilities." Thus, "such soldiers . . . shut themselves off from the common task, forget to coordinate their efforts with those of their comrades."³ Indeed, "Captain Nedorezov saw that in the company everybody was concerned with what seemed necessary to him, but in a so-called 'personal' plan."⁴ "The Senior Lieutenant noted that some experienced tank commanders and tank gunners . . . strive to fulfill only their own obligations, do not care about how things stand with the young members of the crew or feel with (*bolet'*) only their own crew or platoon."⁵

"Senior Lieutenant N. Zhorov violated one of the basic laws of combat One must include into one's calculations not only one battery, but the entire arms system of the ship."⁶

"The cooperation within the platoon and with the nearest neighbors was not worked out."⁷ "The experience of combat exercises shows," according to an anonymous authority, "that some commanders and staff officers, when organizing cooperation between units, not rarely content themselves with routine indications . . . or merely paraphrase combat missions with a few comments, without taking any account of concrete conditions"; while clearly "indications on cooperation between units should complete and elaborate combat orders."⁸

¹General of the Army P. Belik, VV, 1975, No. 9, p. 24

²Op. cit., p. 106.

³Col. A. Kitov, KVS, 1976, No. 2, p. 58.

⁴Col. E. Babynin, KZ, March 4, 1977.

⁵Capt. P. Labutin, VV, 1976, No. 3, p. 71.

⁶Captain of the Second Rank A. Frolov, KZ, December 4, 1977.

⁷Editorial, VV, 1976, No. 5, p. 3.

⁸Editorial, VV, 1975, No. 10, p. 4.

Thus the performance of an individual or a small group is apt to be more satisfactory than the coordination of their activities with their surroundings. "Senior Lieutenant V. Krivchik works not badly, but often it turns out that he works only for himself."¹ He is one of those "soldiers who, when fulfilling a common task with comrades, orient themselves exclusively on their own possibilities." Strange, "one cannot reproach them for a dishonest relationship towards the fulfillment of their obligations;" in fact, "such soldiers deploy much effort."² "There were also those," a general officer observes, "who worked for themselves; who, for instance, fired well, but did not get around to helping those who were in need of their experience"³--perhaps a part of the reality which gives rise to the well-known stress on "sharing experience" (which I shall not document). "In general," a peer judges, "the motorized riflemen and tankmen did not by themselves act badly in the dynamic of the [simulated] battle." Yet, "one did not feel that there was coordination (*soglasovannost'*), a firm cohesion (*spaiika*) between them."⁴

"In one exercise the commanders of two companies-- Senior Lieutenant V. Voronov commanding a motorized rifle company and Senior Lieutenant V. Es'kov commanding a tank company--entered the same situation into their maps. The units were neighbors on the training ground and often met in the field.

But apparently it is not enough to live in neighboring barracks so as to know each other really.

-- I convinced myself that each of the companies is by itself not badly prepared--remarked in the review of an exercise the officer of a higher staff. -- But in combat they supplement each other weakly. ...That is, each taken by itself, the companies could aspire to a good evaluation. But I cannot evaluate their common actions highly."⁵

¹ Capt. I. Kikeshev, VV, 1976, No. 7, p. 64.

² Col. A. Kitov, KVS, 1976, No. 2, p. 58.

³ Lt.-Gen. A. Trofimov, KVS, 1976, No. 10, p. 32.

⁴ Capt. V. Goryavin, KZ, February 2, 1977.

⁵ Lt.-Col. A. Sokharenko, KZ, October 5, 1976.

Such lack of coordination degrades performance in simulated combat:

"Approaching a water barrier, the unit of Lieutenant-Colonel N. Gorbatyuk overcame it only with great difficulty. But at the same time nearby means for crossing were lying idle, as the sappers had not received the mission of securing the crossing by the troops. More than that, Lieutenant-Colonel Gorbatyuk did not know what artillery support he had. In one word, the cooperation between infantry, tanks, artillery, engineer and other units had not been organized before the beginning of the battle."¹

"Calculating that the battle for the hamlet would be led by the company commanded by Popov, acting on the ledge on the right, I decided to move ahead as quickly as possible. Popov replicated my mistake, also detouring the hamlet and continuing the attack. He forgot about one of the basic laws of cooperation, mutual information."²

If an offensive force is composed of several kinds of elements with different capabilities for speed, each of them may use its own potential without regard to the others' movements. "Instead of moving forward after the motorized troops and supporting their attack with fire, the BMPs went ahead with great speed."³

"Lt. Makarov took the correct decision: to speed the advance of the infantry and to conduct the battle on foot in cooperation with the tanks...

"Everybody knows that in such a very difficult situation...all participants in the battle are obliged to act as a unitary excellently coordinated collective in which everybody knows what to do, where to do it, and how.

¹General of the Army I. Pavlovskii, VV, 1968, No. 7, p. 9.

²An officer quoted by Col. R. Dukov, KVS, 1968, No. 7, p. 47.

³Lt.-Col. B. Gadalin, VV, 1976, No. 10, p. 42.

"...Nothing resembling that happened...The tanks broke away from the motorized riflemen. Their crews concentrated attention only on striking 'their own' targets and were little interested in how things were going in the company they were supposed to support; while Lieutenant Makarov was unable to force the tank men to act in the interest of the fulfillment of the common task."¹

Contact, and hence the possibility of coordination may be sacrificed to speed:

"According to calculations, the advance detachment should already have seized the mountain pass. But whether it had done so the commander did not know: contact with the advance detachment had been interrupted...

"[Later] it turned out that the communications specialists bore no responsibility for that...The radio station had been turned off and left at the mountain pass because its vehicle was stalled. Such was an order by Officer A. Antonov, striving to preserve the high speed of the attack. He hoped...to justify this temporary impairment of contact by merely technical reasons...[But in reality] the commander...was guided by the principle: it is the communications specialists who are responsible for contact, my business is tactics."²

Concerned only with minimizing the losses of his own unit, an officer may be little disturbed by the fact that he is thus going to bring about the failure of an operation in which other units, too, are participating:

"In an exercise the company of Senior Lieutenant I. Sukhoyraskii accomplished an envelopment so as to arrive in the rear of the 'enemy's' strongpoint. Calculating the time for this movement, the commander did not take account of the terrain and weather. As a result the speed of the maneuver turned out to be lower than foreseen because some machines got stuck. The company acting from the front began attacking, not waiting for the strike in the rear of the 'enemy' (it is implied that such waiting was unfeasible or would have been unprofitable - NL). The mission turned out to be unfulfilled.

¹ Lt.-Col. B. Gudymenko, VV, 1974, No. 12, p. 51.

² Maj. L. Golovnev, KZ, April 15, 1977.

Clearly the senior lieutenant should not have spent time on the pulling out of the tanks which had got stuck, but should have arrived at the intended line at the planned time, even without two-three machines. In that case the sudden strike together with the unit acting from the front would undoubtedly have brought success."¹

A commander may be disinterested in events outside his unit even when being that risks catastrophe for himself. "Is it really," asks an observer in apparent puzzlement, "of no import (*bezrazlichno*) for a pilot of the leading aircraft to know what goes on in a crew with which he will have to act in combat wing by wing?"²

"In exercises one sometimes has to observe the following situation: an officer determines missions for units and attached means in precise fashion, coordinates their actions thoroughly; that is, everything seems to be in good order. But when the battle begins, the all-arms commander forgets about attached and supporting means. He does not update their tasks, does not inform them of changes in the situation, does not concern himself with changing their location or communicating with them. Something of this kind happened to Captain R. Avgurov. He remembered the AA battery attached to him only when he received information about the approach of 'enemy' aviation. He then tried to bring the battery closer to his unit; but this turned out to be not so simple. The AA people occupied their new position only when the 'air attack' was already ending. The unit bore substantial 'losses.'"³

While, in an exercise, the APCs slowly "move from cover to cover," "the tanks succeed in advancing far forward." Thus their "commander lost contact with his neighbor...He erupted (*vyrvat'sya*) forward, he put his denuded flank under stabbing fire and the whole platoon perished."⁴

¹Co. V. Savel'ev, VV, 1976.

²Maj. A. Drozdov, KZ, September 22, 1976.

³Editorial, VV, 1968, No. 6, p. 6.

⁴Maj. V. Vozovikov, VV, 1976, No. 4, p. 33.

Individuals and units are, it is hinted, disposed to be unconcerned with comrades and "neighbors" because they are not sure of the latters' skill or will. "One of the important conditions for the successful activity of fighters under a deficit of time," an analyst advances, "is mutual trust..." It is indeed "the certainty that the other team members faultlessly know their business and will not spare energy for the fulfillment of the common task" which "makes people cohere (*splachivat'*)," whereas "the slightest doubt in the mastery or the spiritual forces of one of the fighters will sharply reduce cohesion."¹

In these conditions the High Command insists on the importance of coordination. It rejects the convenient contention that it is less serious a matter for small than for large units, "judgments that the necessity to maintain cooperation in all links is less important for the platoon and the company than, let us say, for the regiment or the battalion."²

"If," it seems worthwhile pointing out, "within the staff due cohesion is not attained, the staff is simply not capable of furnishing the commander help to a full extent."³ "If a tank crew performs a maneuver of evading ATGMs," an analyst will explain, "the issue of that maneuver will depend on the degree to which the activities of the commander, the mechanic-driver and gunner are precisely coordinated. In case their actions are insufficiently closely meshed (*prierty*) between themselves..."⁴ "It is difficult," an anonymous authority will deem it useful to teach, "to overestimate the importance of uninterrupted cooperation with neighbors;" for "flanks and gaps are the most vulnerable places where the enemy most often attempts to strike." Hence, "if actions between neighboring units are not thoroughly coordinated, if by a common effort gaps are not covered by fire...one may suffer defeat."⁵

¹Col. A. Kitov, KVS, 1976, No. 2, p. 57.

²Editorial, VV, 1972, No. 6, p. 3.

³Maj.-Gen. V. Mikhailov, KZ, July 13, 1976.

⁴Col. A. Kitov, KVS, 1976 No. 2, p. 57.

⁵Editorial, VV, 1968, No. 6, p. 6.

In view of the disposition to be self-centered even at severe expense to oneself, the High Command may recall that one better concern oneself with the other because he impinges so massively on oneself. "It is indispensable," an analysis shows, "to maintain uninterruptedly the contact with neighboring units because...zones of radio-activity, emerging in the neighbor's sector, can cover the area of one's own advance."¹

Given the intensity of the absorption in self to be counter-acted, the High Command expresses its requirement in emphatic fashion: the armed forces should be a "united family" in which "constant solicitude (*zabota*)" of all toward any reigns, in which everybody is "ready for mutual assistance (*vzaimovyruchka*)."
"Men will "defend their officers in battle"² runs a rare and perhaps revealing specification of the incessant demand for personnel to "help" each other.

High cohesion of a unit, instead of being expected if not taken for granted, appears as a striking feature beheld with relief and joy. "Precisely *splochnost'* (cohesion)--that is the first thing which anybody feels who comes to the regiment."³ One may perceive officers as "meshed (*priertnost'*) one with the other."⁴ "The company...met the 'enemy' infantry and tanks with united fire."⁵ "In the course of the attack the BMPs and the tanks were united as if by invisible threads; in so coordinated a manner did they act"⁶: the elated counterpoint we would expect to the depressed admissions of noncoordination cited above.

In a compromise between reality and wish cohesion is presented as not perfect, yet steadily rising. "Interest in how things stand with the neighboring unit is rising,"⁷ "the unit has become more

¹Maj.-Gen. Yu. Z. Novikov and Col. F. D. Sverdlov: Maneuver in the All-Arms Battle, Moscow 1967, p. 72.

²KVS, 1976, No. 1, p. 50.

³Lt.-Col. N. Chizh, KZ, January 21, 1976.

⁴KZ, April 4, 1976.

⁵Passim, e.g., Col. I. Syrovatkin, VV, 1972, No. 11, p. 31.

⁶Capt. V. Goryavin, KZ, February 2, 1977.

⁷KVS, 1976, No. 2, p. 58.

united, more cohesive,"¹ unity (*druzhiba*, literally, friendship) grows from day to day."²

Beyond what is implicitly admitted here, the very praise of a good component of the forces may convey dissatisfaction with the run of things. "Yes," exults an observer, "in the exercises in this company everything was different": "Senior Lieutenant Sedykh...constantly required from his entire personnel... an uninterrupted close cooperation between platoons."³

That affirming high cohesion is another instance of transmuting wish into reality, or pretending to do so (see Section 9), may become apparent in a hint of how bad the situation would be were it not so good. Having proclaimed that "all of us--and in the company fighters of six nationalities are serving--. . . form a united combat family," an officer may add that "the interest of the cause requires that comradely relations reign among us."⁴

The only safe assertion to make is a truism (or tautology, depending on the implicit meanings of the key words) as when "experience in training shows" to an analyst that "the cohesion of units, crews and commands is higher where . . . " *what* "obtains?" "Mutual help among the fighters," of course.⁵

While the truth of an agreeably sounding sentence about *splochenost'* may follow from the meanings of its words, reality, alas, has to be changed by actions designed to foster that precious and elusive quality of a "military collective." It is "a grave error," thus a pervasive Bolshevik point will be applied to the matter at hand, to rely on "the very structure (*uklad*) of army life fostering the togetherness (*obshchenie*) of people, the emergence of contact between them."⁶

¹KZ, July 18, 1976.

²KVS, 1976, No. 10, p. 36.

³Maj. V. Vozovikov, VV, 1972, No. 4, p. 33.

⁴Sr. Lt. L. Berder, VV, 1976, No. 7, p. 30.

⁵Col. A. Kitov, KVS, 1976, No. 3, p. 57.

⁶Col.-Gen. P. Gorchakov, KZ, July 4, 1976.

"Comradely relations between people" is a state to be "achieved through hard and protracted effort," the meaning of the omnipresent verb *dobit'sya*.¹ It is, as in so many other respects, "special attention" which must be directed towards "making military collectives cohere, towards the formation in them of the feeling of military comradeship."²

And that objective, an anonymous authority informs us, "is now considered to be one of the most important indicators of the effectiveness of the work of the commanders and political cadres, of Party and Komsomol organizations."³

An objective on behalf of which persuasion is of course to be applied. When, before the first exercise of young marines in a stormy sea, their commander arranges for an evening with their seniors, what was, "the main thing which the experienced marines tried to transmit to their comrades?" Well, "their personal experience of... maintaining in difficult conditions an atmosphere of mutual help (*vzaimovyruchka i pomoshch' tovarishcham*)."⁴

Yet persuasion is not enough. "It is useful," judges an analyst about personnel, "periodically to give them tasks in the fulfillment of which it is *impossible* not to collaborate."⁵ One may recommend for "socialist competition" an arrangement where scores were computed for small groups "which led to an increased cohesion of personnel, forced (*zastavit'*) them to help each other."⁶

¹KVS 1976, No. 10, p. 32.

²Col. I. Samokhin, KVS, 1976, No. 1, p. 51.

³Editorial, KVS, 1975, No. 7, p. 8.

⁴Lt. Commander V. Shirokov, KZ, March 29, 1977.

⁵Col. A. Kitov, KVS, 1976, No. 2, p. 58.

⁶Capt. P. Labutin, VV, 1976, No. 3, p. 71.

PART 3: INACTIVITY

Section 12: BAD MOODS

Perceiving (as I shall attempt to illustrate in a moment) a high dependence of performance on mood, the High Command is also aware of the ease with which bad moods arise":...and then the mood in the unit got altogether bad (*isportit'sya*)."¹ A senior officer recalls how "moods"--I presume he is mainly concerned with bad ones--"spread quickly in units."²

Now "the good mood (*nastroi*) of personnel is an important matter."³

It may be a necessary condition of high performance. "The mood in the personnel was high," recalls a senior officer, "but instead of...utilizing their surge (*pod'em*) of soul for the successful fulfillment of the firing exercise, the units' commanders..."⁴

And bad mood is a sufficient condition of low performance:

"Watch Private Zolotkov, counselled the company commander, he seems to be out of sorts.

-- Well, so Zolotkov is depressed (*v rasstroen-nykh chuvstakh*), thought the Lieutenant, there is no need to carry him on my hands. ...In the next exercise with BMPs Private A. Zolotkov committed a gross error...

-- Everything depends on the mood of people."⁵

"Emotional states," a senior officer sums it up, "substantially influence...the capacity of personnel for combat...Moods (*nastroenie*) are a great...force."⁶

¹KZ, March 23, 1977.

²Vice-Admiral V. Shelyag, KVS, 1975, No. 7, p. 34.

³KZ, January 23, 1976.

⁴Maj. Gen. G. Komolev, KVS, 1977, No. 5, p. 50.

⁵Lt. A. Oleinik, VV, 1976, No. 10, pp. 70-71.

⁶Vice-Admiral V. Shelyag, KVS, 1975, No. 7, p. 34.

While "Soviet military psychology has proved that in the measure in which man's psyche gets stronger, he acquires the habit of mastering his mood"¹--which also shows how a tautology may help in mastering an intractable reality--the High Command demands here as elsewhere that things not be left to "drift (*samotek*).² Rather, "an important element of the art of leadership" is "the ability to obtain that the unit's mood be always one of optimism."³ Beware of the many "irritants (*razdrazhitel'*)" which so easily and massively "spoil" mood! "Tone" of voice being one of them, General Kulikov observes that "officers are trained . . . to adopt the appropriate tone (*intonatsiya*) when transmitting their orders by radio";⁴ for "the quality of the fulfillment of an order depends greatly on the form in which it is given, in what language, in what tone."⁴

Attention to this is needed all the more as officers, the High Command expects spontaneously tend towards either inattentiveness or rudeness, or both, in dealing with their subordinates, thus inducing bad moods in them.

Unless a superior imposes "tutelage (*opek*)" on a subordinate, out of solicitude and/or for self protection--a well-known target of strictures by the High Command which I shall not document here--he may, the High Command fears, keep an excessive distance from him. "Lieutenant V. Sharaev . . . shuns his subordinates, interests himself little in their moods, needs, questions."⁵ For the same reason "it became necessary to demand that Sergeant K. Mikhilov work more with his subordinates, show more attention and sensitivity (*chutkost'*) towards them."⁶ In fact, "the misfortune (*beda*) of many young lieutenants consists in the fact that, to start with, they do not always succeed in combining . . . exactingness . . . with attention to people, care for them . . ."⁷

¹Col. A. Petrov, VV, 1969, No. 5, p. 60.

²Vice-Admiral V. Shelyag, KVS, 1975, No. 4, p. 34.

³VV, 1967, p. 51.

⁴Editorial, VV, 1963, No. 9, p. 6.

⁵Lt.-Col. V. Devin, KZ, January 23, 1976.

⁶Sr. Lt. L. Berder, VV, 1976, No. 7, p. 30.

⁷Lt.-Gen. A. Trofimov, KVS, 1976, No. 10, p. 33.

But the young officers who are thus dishing out a measure of abandonment are in turn taking it from *their* superiors. For "far from always do superiors conduct themselves attentively and sensitively towards young company commanders. There are cases where battalion commanders and staff officers rarely go to the companies. And if they do go, they...do not interest themselves in how the company commanders are doing."¹

Yet "when a person in service...acts with the full engagement of his forces (*napryazhenie*), it is important not to leave him without attention."² Unceasingly requesting that one be "sensitive to people, their needs and questions,"³ that one show "care" for them, the High Command sketches a utopia peopled by beings like that officer for whom "attention towards people became an inner need."⁴ There is always relief and joy in beholding a "Lieutenant Kireev who did not leave a single one of the questions which sergeants and soldiers addressed to him without attention."⁵

And whose "attention" did not take the familiar shape of *grubost'*, rudeness, a stance towards subordinates discerned and combated by the High Command ⁶ which I shall not document here.

Rudeness is "lack of control (*nesderzhannost'*) in the choice of expressions," self-control is absence of rudeness: "if the officer keeps control of himself (*vladet' soboi*)...protects the honor and dignity of subordinates..."⁷

Beyond rudeness, "lack of control" is yielding to a miscellany of undesirable impulses which in turn generate both bad moods and

¹Col.-Gen. P. Mel'nikov, KZ, August 24, 1976.

²Col. V. Grushchets, KVS, 1975, No. 11, p. 34.

³KVS, 1976, No. 10, p. 28.

⁴Passim, e.g., Lt. A. Oleinik, VV, 1976, No. 10, p. 71.

⁵Lt.-Gen. A. Trofimov, KVS, 1976, No. 10, p. 31.

⁶cf. Herbert Goldhamer, op cit, pp. 180-181.

⁷Vice-Admiral M. Ozimov, KVS, 1976, No. 9, p. 42.

lack of control over them in others. "To whom is it agreeable to see a commander, or even a flag officer . . . disposed to yield to a bad mood or even a caprice?"¹ What is agreeable is to see this officer: "He was ready to flare up. But knowing this weakness of his, he made an effort to suppress his irritation."² Demidkin pressed his nerves into a fist, there is no point in boiling."³

Section 13: INDIFFERENCE

Personnel, the High Command perceives, often shows a "light-minded (*legkomyslennyi*, *legkovesnyi*) attitude towards assignments"⁴ which leads to "negligence (*bespechnost'*, *neradivost'*, *khalatnost'*) in performance. What is thus designated is often the presence of "indifference (*bezrazlichie*, *ravnodushie*)," the absence of *élan* (*ogonëk*). "In this unit one did not feel a real combat *élan* (*nakal*) Some soldiers reacted with indifference."⁵

That the High Command assesses this reaction to be widespread is indicated by the stress it puts on countermeasures. "The communists," an observer will say about a unit, "*stubbornly strive to obtain* that every soldier consider the fulfillment of his obligations as his very own intimate (*rodnyi krovnyi*) affair and give himself over to it wholly"⁶: the extreme nature of the ideal envisaged points, in my surmise, to the equally extreme character of what one is combating. It apparently needs "selfless work and flaming words" on the part of communists in another unit so as to "obtain from the fighters" merely "an honest (*dobrosovestnyi*) attitude towards the fulfillment of their service obligations."⁷ Indeed, with regard to

¹Capt. of the First Rank M. Sokolov, KZ, May 20, 1976.

²Lt.-Commander P. Bakarov, KZ, June 18, 1976.

³Col. A. Stibnev, KZ, September 3, 1976.

⁴Passim, e.g., KZ, January 4, 1976.

⁵Maj. G. Shafikov, KVS, 1977, No. 13, p. 34.

⁶Lt.-Col. M. Korotaev, KVS, 1966, No. 3, p. 36.

⁷Maj.-Gen. I. Mednikov, VV, 1966, No. 4, p. 51.

reactions as basic as "the feeling of obligation (*dolg*) and responsibility for one's assignment," "the rearing of these qualities... is a lengthy and complicated process, the results of which do not appear immediately. It requires stubborn arduous (*kropotlivyi*) work."¹

Work *against* an attitude which is not named in the statements I just quoted, but which is at times fully designated, such as when we learn that "Senior Lieutenant Vladimirov knew by experience: when *no* soldiers who are indifferent to the fate of the common cause are present in the collective, then any difficulties can be overcome."² "As is well known," comments another officer, "every undertaking has one enemy whose name is indifference."³ "Fight indifference" seems to be a slogan recommended to young officers.

The habitual reign of indifference may be acknowledged once it has, allegedly, passed: "how the character of the exercise had changed! Even the most inert soldiers had come to life!"⁴

Misfortunes are apt to provoke indifference. When a young officer has committed a mistake, is censured by his superior, attempts to undo his error, commits another one in that very effort, and is now censured more strictly, he writes his friend: "You won't believe it, but I was seized by some kind of indifference..."⁵

But an ostensibly minor, unintentional slight might have the same result, as a lieutenant learned: "Earlier I noted in the eyes of Sergeant Alenov signs of live interest in the unit's business. I liked his energy...But gradually the light in the eyes of the sergeant became extinguished, and there appeared a cold estrangement."⁶

¹Lt.-Col. P. Gorchakov, KVS, 1976, No. 7, p. 50.

²Lt.-Col. V. Devin, KZ, January 23, 1976.

³Lt.-Col. N. Bukhteev, VV, 1975, No. 7, p. 20.

⁴Lt.-Col. A. Smetanin, VV, 1966, No. 7, p. 58.

⁵Lt. O. Dobrovolskii, KZ, February 27, 1977.

⁶Lt. V. Tarkhanov, KZ, February 5, 1976.

Even a favorable state of soul may be felt to hover on the brink of indifference. "*Uravnoveshennost'* (equilibrium of mind, even temper)," warns General Pavlovskii, "must not pass over into (*perekhodit' v*) indifference."¹ There is, one may hear, a category of officers who at first attract no attention to themselves: they have neither problems nor successes. But then, after a year or two, such an officer may become indifferent to everything. Thus moderation veers towards insufficiency; to guard against too little or nothing one must obtain much or all.

Also because mere lack of ardor is already apt to lead to a performance which is low. "More than once," an observer recalls, "I had to be present at exercises in the platoons commanded by Lieutenant B. Braun and Ensign I. Deiba." To be sure, "externally, here, training and competition always seemed to be organically fused." Yet "one felt that all this was done without soul, in a formal fashion, as a 'measure' prescribed by somebody." And "*hence* the *weak* results of the competition."²

Still, the mere absence of indifference becomes already a manifestation of excellence. "The Division Commander Guards Major N. Cheb felt that his subordinates went to the training area, as one says, not with a cold heart" ³ "There were no indifferent ones" is a striking thing to say about a unit, ⁴ as it is for a Marshal to describe it as one "where communists and Komsomol members show a personal example . . . of an honest (*dobrosovestnyi*) relationship to service" ⁵

¹VV, 1971, No. 1, p. 6.

²Maj. A. Ramanauskas, KZ, April 7, 1977.

³Lt.-Col. A. Zakharenko, KZ, October 13, 1977.

⁴Lt.-Col. V. Golovkin, KZ, April 18, 1977.

⁵B. Kutakhov, KVS, 1975, No. 1, p. 32.

"The submariners now had to perform the complicated work of . . . inspecting the complexes and systems of the ship. This is a laborious and meticulous process. It is not easy to accelerate it, but there was a need for doing so; and now the rocket specialist, Captain of the Third Rank Yu. Kavizin, approached the commander.

-- In my opinion, Comrade Commander, there is a way to shorten the work.

The officer's idea was highly effective and elegant. But that which perhaps gladdened Captain of the First Rank Lyulin above all was Kavizin's deep interest in the common business, his willingness and striving to help the commander."¹

"Technology, say his comrades about Major-Engineer E. Koval, is his element (*stikhiia*)": a bit of utopia already realized and which the High Command proposes to enlarge, setting itself the task "to create a situation . . . in which people themselves, without prompting, without having to be aroused, actively strive to help the commander."² The way in which this aspiration is expressed indicates, it seems to me, how distant it is from a reality corrupted by indifference.

Section 14: SLUGGISHNESS

The Soviet High Command discerns among its forces a disposition of those who should be doers--"participants"--to make themselves into mere "spectators"; one manner of wasting time (see also Section 6 for the pages to follow). "Not Spectators, But Participants," a headline in the military daily³ claims, and hovers between raising a demand and reporting perfection. Indeed, according to an observer, "in some tactical exercises of large scale it often happens that soldiers, and sometimes even sergeants, don't do anything at all (*voobshche bezdeistvovat*')."⁴

¹Sr. Lt. A. Tkachev, KZ, March 20, 1977.

²Ibid.

³KZ, March 23, 1977.

⁴Lt.-Col. I. Noskov, KVS, 1968, No. 24, p. 53.

"It was natural to expect that Lieutenant G. Bogatov, acting as company commander, would make the effort to organize the exercise so that it would be of maximum usefulness for all.

However, one had to observe...[the following] picture. In the advancing dusk the combat vehicles stood solitary. Far from them, in the rear part of the grounds a campfire was burning. Around it sat soldiers.

-- What are you going to exercise?

-- We are preparing equipment and weapons for firing.

-- Here at the campfire?

Private G. Troshev explained imperturbably:

-- The tyros are in the vehicles, they learn how to handle them...(dots in the text - NL). That is useful for them.

In fact, in the BMPs gunners...were sitting who had arrived very recently from the teaching unit. Left to themselves they essentially did nothing: ...just like those who warmed themselves at the campfire. Here was Sergeant V. Radchenko who hastened to say that he was still new in the company and for this reason bore no responsibility for the organization of the exercise."¹

"The first three hours [of the day] in the platoon commanded by Lieutenant Yu. Nechaev were to consist in tactical preparation. According to the timetable of the day, that should begin at 8:30. However, at 9 o'clock, the platoon was still engaged in grouping the colors... Only at 9:10 did the soldiers reach barracks. It took another quarter of an hour to collect their weapons and gas masks and to prepare themselves for the exercise. Finally, the platoon left the barracks and directed itself to the place of the exercise. This was only several hundred meters away but the passage took... (dots in the text - NL) 20 minutes.

"Thus the lesson began at 9:55, that is with a delay of one hour and 25 minutes...Then the leader... announced a 'break' though only 15 minutes had passed since the beginning of the lesson.

"After the interruption...the personnel exercised only 20 minutes. The officer collected the platoon in formation and with this the exercise ended...From the three hours allotted to tactical preparation, the motorized riflemen had trained for 35 minutes."²

¹ Sr. Lt. A. Savadash, KZ, January 4, 1976.

² Lt.-Col. I. Noskov, KVS, 1968, No. 9, p. 50.

Idleness may be resisting orders: there is a type of "commander who cannot obtain that personnel not stand around idly (*prostoivat'*) . . ."¹

But idleness may also be enforced upon subordinates.

This may be implied, as when we are shown soldiers who "stood there in the cold wind, and from their faces one could see that they were simply bored (*skuchat'*)."²

Or the presence of arrangements imposing idleness may itself be the subject of description. "Junior Sergeant V. Zhigarev . . . called on one soldier and trained him. The others stood around (*stoyat'*) and watched (*nablyudat'*), doing nothing."³

"The group of fighters under the leadership of Junior Sergeant Morozyuk is in the process of fulfilling the norms for the dismantling and assembling of weapons. The exercise is built in this fashion: one soldier takes an automatic rifle to pieces, and five watch him do it. and thus in turn.

Of course, observing the actions of comrades is also a form of training; frankly speaking, not the most effective one. Without difficulty one could organize the affair so that all fighters at the same time fulfilled the norm."⁴

--a suggestion applied by another unit where, "while one crew was firing, other tank men did not passively wait for their 'turn,' but rather fulfilled . . . obligations . . . on training vehicles."⁵

Yet, though "everybody knows that in exercises the troops should conduct active combat actions for most of the time, . . . nevertheless, it happens that units find themselves for two or three days in their starting areas so that commanders may have the possibility of . . . studying tasks on the terrain."⁶

¹Col.-Gen. G. Salmonov, KZ, June 5, 1976.

²Maj. A. Polyakov, KZ, January 8, 1977.

³Lt.-Col. I. Noskov, KVS, 1968, No. 9, p. 51.

⁴Lt.-Col. A. Pimenov, KZ, March 25, 1977.

⁵Maj.-Gen. E. Moiseev, KZ, March 23, 1977.

⁶Editorial, VV, 1976, No. 7, p. 4.

" -- Why don't you begin the firing exercise? I asked the lieutenant. The answer:

" -- I don't have the right, the leader is not here. He must give the command...(dots in the text - NL).

"True, the leader of the firing exercise, the commander of the battalion, was absent; he had been detained somewhere. But that does not mean that one could not engage in useful activity without him. The company commander did not have the right to begin the firing exercise, but he could have organized and was obliged to organize training on teaching points (*tochka*)."¹

"One ship conducted a search for an 'enemy' submarine. This occupied only the ASW unit. The other seamen...did not feel at all that they participated in 'combat,' they were bored, waiting for the end of the trip. This was discussed at a Party meeting. At that occasion the communists of the ship were criticized for not having utilized the period of search for working, for instance, on tasks of fighting for the ship's survivability (*zhivuchest'*), the repulse of the air enemy, etc."²

"According to intelligence, the attack of the 'enemy' was going to occur the next morning. Thus the company had a day at its disposal. How was it utilized? The Deputy Commander for Political Affairs...conducted a short conversation with the future officers. Then the officers in training worked out actions in pursuance of an insignificant directive. The remaining many hours they sat with their hands folded.

"But it would have been possible to organize exercises about tactics, the working out of norms concerning the use of individual means of defense [against nuclear weapons], to arrange for training in the overcoming of natural obstacles, etc. The conditions for this were most appropriate. But Major Grishin did not utilize them."³

What appears as high activity may in fact be ordered idleness.

"Some submarine commanders," a senior officer observes, "endlessly announce alerts during which the personnel is at its combat posts for hours having nothing to do..."⁴

¹ Lt.-Col. I. Noskov, KVS, 1968, No. 9, p. 51.

² Vice-Admiral V. Ivanov, KVS, 1966, No. 1, p. 21.

³ Lt.-Col. I. Noskov, KVS, 1968, No. 9, pp. 52-53.

⁴ Vice-Admiral V. Ivanov, KVS, 1966, No. 1, p. 21.

Commanded inactivity is apt to be tiring rather than restful. "Sometimes," notes another eminent observer, "officers, before firing exercises and without any need for it, force personnel to remain for a considerable time in the place of exercise, give insufficient attention to the organization of...rest. As a result, the fighters are tired at the beginning of the exercise and sometimes fulfill their obligations only with difficulty."¹

If, in the face of their commander's dereliction, subordinates proceed on their own, they may merely replace damage from inaction with loss from faulty operation:

"In fact (*prakticheski*), nobody commanded the firing from the BMPs. How else could one explain, for instance, that Sergeant V. Rybkin and Private V. Dovletyarov on their own opened fire from a distance which clearly did not allow for the reliable destruction of the target?"²

If one avoids utter idleness, one may still fall prey to listlessness in action (*s prokhladtsem*), that is to less than full effort. A military leader distinguishes between "those who work giving their full force (*s polnoi otdachei*) and those who work only listlessly."³ "It occurs," according to another prominent observer, "that an officer possesses sufficient mental and physical force, but does not have the desire or the patience to use them effectively...who fulfills orders listlessly,"⁴ not "in the full measure of his possibilities,"⁵ not "strenuously (*napryazhenno*)," but rather "lowering his arms."

That is probably (see Section 13) because "it can't be said that he burns in his work,"⁶ because he operates "flaccidly (*vyalo*)," "without fire," "without inspiration," "in soulless fashion," from "indifference":

¹Col.-Gen. Kh. Ambaryan, KVS, 1970, No. 1, p. 51.

²Lt.-Col. B. Gudymenko, VV, 1974, No. 12, pp. 51-52.

³General of the Army V. F. Margelov, KVS, 1976, No. 5, p. 32.

⁴Col.-Gen. N. Lyashchenko, VV, 1967, No. 9, p. 48.

⁵KVS, 1976, No. 10, p. 5.

⁶Lt. V. Svetikov, VV, 1976, No. 10, p. 5.

"In the case of Junior Lieutenant Valery Pugachev service 'didn't work out' from the very beginning... His indifference toward the affairs of the platoon soon became clear. He did not feel like making efforts in work."¹

Or "not being overburdened with work," enjoying a "quiet life" may become the very aspiration of man.²

Such a person will serve "in middling fashion (*ni shatko ni val'ko*)."³

Again and again the High Command comes up against the fact that "people are content (*dovol'stvovat'sya*) with extremely modest results."⁴

Yet the consequences of engaging in less than full effort are highly damaging. "Only four percent of gross violations of military laws," a senior officer recalls, "occurred during training. The overwhelming majority of violations of discipline took place during the time when personnel was left to itself."⁵

In the context I have described there will obviously be a stress on the requirement "not to remain an outside (*postoronnyi*) observer," but rather to "fully engage one's forces (*napryazhennost'*).⁶ Even to generals and admirals one may address the demand to "unceasingly show love of work (*trudolubye*).⁷ General Epishev, in 1977 poses before the armed forces the objective "to accomplish (*dobit'sya*) that standards of conscientious (*dobrosovestnyi*) service become...the norm of conduct for all."⁶

Given the subordinates' recalcitrance, demands may become less than extreme. One page farther the same military leader aspires merely "to accomplish that everybody busy himself with his assignment (*zanimat'sya svoim delom*)."⁷

¹Capt. I. Kikeshev, VV, 1976, No. 7, p. 65.

²Passim, e.g., KVS, 1976, No. 7, p. 46.

³VV, 1976, No. 11, p. 65.

⁴Capt. V. Ovsyannikov, KVS, 1977, No. 2, p. 42.

⁵Col.-Gen. Kh. Ambaryan, KVS, 1970, No. 1, p. 41.

⁶KVS, 1977, No. 2, p. 20.

⁷Loc. cit., p. 21.

When somebody avoids sluggishness, he becomes something to marvel at. "The missilemen act with a full straining of their forces."¹ "A particular feature (*osobennost'*) of these as well as other exercises," a senior officer reports, "was the fact that training time was not wasted, nobody of the tankmen did nothing (*sidet' bez dela*)."² "Here, for instance," thus a model is introduced, "is Lieutenant Nikolai Lavrenkov. He is an assiduous . . . officer. Of him one could not say that he prepared himself for flights listlessly."³ More positively, "in our unit Captain Mikhalev enjoys a high reputation," for "with his entire soul (*s dushoi*), with enviable effort he fulfills his duty."⁴ More modestly--which makes the statement more remarkable--"in our unit there are not a few young commanders and political workers who honestly fulfill their obligations."⁵ And then there is a senior officer, "Comrade Lutsenko [who] holds fast to the firm rule: only that officer can count on promotion and reward who honestly fulfills his obligations."⁶

Not that this "comes by itself." "The officers of the company," an observer discerns, "*knew how to implant* in the soldiers a feeling of responsibility for the execution of obligations undertaken."⁷

Strong means may be applied for limited aims. It may be recommended for "force" personnel--to go beyond the call of duty? No, merely to "relate to their assignment in a more responsible manner (*otvetstvennee*)."⁸ "The officer . . . promised to award to Lieutenants E. Barta and M. Mak'yarov a short leave if . . . "they went beyond requirements"? No, merely "if they worked as they were supposed to (*potrudatsya kak sleduet*)."⁹

¹ Lt.-Col. M. Makarov, KZ, December 18, 1977.

² Maj.-Gen. G. Komolev, KVS, 1977, No. 5, p. 50.

³ Lt.-Col. A. Zubkov, KZ, April 13, 1977.

⁴ Lt.-Col. Altashin, KVS, 1976, No. 7, p. 45.

⁵ Capt. I. Kikeshev, VV, 1976, No. 7, p. 64.

⁶ Col. A. Nedosugov, KVS, 1966, No. 5, p. 42.

⁷ Lt.-Col. S. Mostovoi, VV, 1976, No. 4, p. 25.

⁸ KVS, 1975, No. 3, p. 21.

⁹ Capt. I. Kikeshev, VV, 1976, No. 7, p. 63.

"What are, for instance," a senior officer asks, "the sources of the successes of the personnel in these units?" The answer does not seem to bother him: "In them . . . the communists try to keep every man within their field of vision in any situation--in the exercises, on guard duty, in the hours of leisure."¹ It is taken for granted that "without a well-arranged checking-up on fulfillment...even honest (*dobrosovestnyi*) workers begin to take a worse attitude towards their work."²

Section 15: FAILURE TO CARRY THROUGH

That the High Command discerns in its forces a disposition *not* to "go to the end" in the execution of missions is indicated in several indirect ways.

It may, for instance, seem worthwhile to dwell on any number (as we shall see) of capital, but also obvious aspects of the path leading from the choice of an objective to its realization. "The best founded decision will be hanging in air," a senior officer explains, "if the commander does not show the will...for his calculation to be realized (*voplotitsya v real'nye dela*)."³

Without stringent measures of enforcement, it may be observed as if this were a matter of course, there would be little carrying through of enterprises upon which one had ostensibly embarked. It is, according to an analyst "as a rule" that "lack of surveillance" will "lead to" *neispolnitel'nost*, a Soviet noun that means: failure to carry through.⁴

Beyond such clear implications, direct admissions of the penchant in question abound.⁵ "Lieutenant A. Zelentsov passionately (*goryacho*) undertook (*bratsya za*) everything, but brought nothing to a conclusion."⁶ "A substantial discrepancy," thus a typical observation goes, "turned out to exist between what these officers had planned and what they had really executed."⁷ A headline of

¹Maj.-Gen. V. Mitronov, KVS, 1975, No. 6, p. 43.

²Editorial, KVS, 1966, No. 6, p. 4.

³Lt.-Gen. V. Ivanov, VV, 1975, No. 3, p. 33.

⁴Col. R. Dukov, KVS, 1969, No. 8, p. 44.

⁵Herbert Goldhamer, op. cit., p. 123.

⁶Col. V. Kostylev, VV, 1966, No. 7, p. 50.

⁷Lt.-Col. L. Muzyka, KZ, October 22, 1976.

the armed forces' daily puts this constellation into a formula: "Obligations Are One Thing. But What Will Actually Happen? (*V obyazatel'stvakh odno. A na dele?*)"¹ "The famous army truth (*istina*)," a senior officer muses, "the commander gives an order, the subordinates fulfill it, is in fact not that simple."² "Sometimes one wonders," a peer joins him, "why it has not become the rule among us that 'if you have given your word--keep it, if you have undertaken an obligation--fulfill it!'"³

Personnel may be busy on behalf of a certain objective, and yet not advance it (cf. Part I). "Regrettably," observes General Pavlovskii about "the study of the new Regulations," "one also encounters facts such as these: a voluminous enumeration of measures is made, ostentatious exercises are held, examinations passed, but the change in the life of the unit which could be expected is not visible."⁴ There are, one may hear, commanders who pass the entire day in the study of their in-box and their out-box with the composition of resolutions, with questions and answers, agreements, meetings, and conferences--without, it is implied, any yield to speak of.

Or there may not even be such a cover for not following through. "Sometimes," a senior officer observes, "much noise is made when obligations are being undertaken. But then silence sets in, and they are forgotten."⁵ "Some comrades," according to an anonymous authority, "remember the actions they had intended to accomplish only when the term for their realization has already elapsed."⁶

One may fail to carry through even when the path toward doing so may seem to us--and to the High Command--short and simple. "It

¹KZ, June 19, 1976.

²Lt.-Gen. V. Ivanov, VV, 1975, No. 3, p. 33.

³Lt.-Gen. I. Gaïdaenko, KVS, 1967, No. 6, p. 31.

⁴KZ, January 10, 1976.

⁵Lt.-Gen. P. Shkidchenko, KVS, 1975, No. 21, p. 36.

⁶Editorial, KVS, 1966, No. 6, p. 4.

is not rare," General Pavlovskii notes, "that a punishment which has been announced is not applied, remaining merely on paper." Thus "Private Shurov was condemned to arrest three times in 1966, but at no time imprisoned."¹

Time and energy may be spent in discussions between the people concerned with an objective, rather than on its realization.

"Because of protracted conferences toward which some commanders nourish an inexhaustible passion," an observer discerns, "a large part of the objectives entertained by commanders of companies, batteries, platoons...remains on paper."² "One still finds commanders," agrees a military leader who also infers intent from effect, "who allot much time to...establishing coordination, to meetings and conferences, and thus strive to create a lying impression of being unusually businesslike, coherent, organized."³

One may not even note, or care, that discussions are redundant. "In the...party organization of the unit whose political worker was Comrade Zolotar', the question of measures to strengthen military discipline was discussed in meetings four times in the course of the year," while "the incidence of violations did not diminish." Now "if one analyzes...the resolutions taken, one arrives at the conclusion that there was in essence one and the same resolution, repeated four times..." What happened was that "they produced paper and did not fulfill what was decided."⁴

Paper is apt to be the actual output. "But the good intentions remained on paper."⁵

Vanished into the air, or powerless on paper, the result is but empty words, a "divergence between word and deed," "an operation which does not go beyond talk," "chattering," "a light-minded attitude toward one's word," "words thrown to the wind."

¹VV, 1967, No. 6, p. 60.

²Lt.-Col. V. Devin, KZ, August 29, 1976.

³Marshal P. Batitskii, KZ, January 16, 1976.

⁴Admiral V. Grishanov, KVS, 1967, No. 8, pp. 14-15.

⁵Passim, e.g., Lt.-Col. A. Pimenov, KZ, March 25, 1977.

Officers may display "a show of total readiness for action." They "unceasingly repeat 'yes, Sir!' 'this will be executed!'" But when the time arrives to report on the practical execution of the matter, they find with similar ease 'objective' reasons which allegedly prevented that."¹ A commander, it may be said, seems to work with the full expenditure of his forces, he apparently strives to react without delay to all remarks of his superiors. However, in reality this is not the case. From higher levels orders come down, plans for measures to eliminate defects are worked out, time passes--and still one has to observe the same defects. "When obligations were assumed," General Pavlovskii recalls about a unit, "many speeches were pronounced. But then everything fell silent, and the obligations were forgotten."² "Formerly," it may be said with unusual mildness, or pretense, "one could often observe how before the beginning of the training year, or of the period of teaching or competition, there was talk on every step, as the saying goes. Meetings were held, obligations discussed...But then the competition was, as it were, forgotten. Its results were not even established everywhere, the victors not determined."³ "As a recent verification has shown," a senior officer reports, "a number of units...have not fulfilled the obligations they have undertaken, have shown themselves to be among the 'givers of false promises (*obeshchalkin*).'"⁴

"In the past training year the ship commanded by Captain of the Third Rank Yu. Savel'ev undertook a high socialist obligation. In meetings many promises and assurances were pronounced. But the promises remained on paper, the assurances remained hanging in the air. The crew surrendered positions it had already won."⁵

¹ Lt.-Gen. O. Kulishev, KZ, January 6, 1976.

² KVS, 1971, No. 1, pp. 19-20.

³ The newspaper of the Odessa Military District quoted in VV, 1973, No. 7, p. 55.

⁴ Lt.-Gen. V. Budakov, VV, 1975, No. 8, p. 61.

⁵ Vice-Admiral M. Ozimov, KVS, 1976, No. 9, p. 40.

Thus busy boasting may *replace* work to make the claim come true; a variant, especially irritating to the High Command, of the "the delight (*uvlechenie*) of some comrades in discussing objectives at the expense of...working towards them."¹ "There are comrades," one may observe decade in, decade out, "whose 'activity' and 'vanguard role' manifests itself above all in words...who report right and left on the high obligations they have undertaken, but do not expend any effort on their fulfillment."² "Among us," another senior officer agrees, "have not yet disappeared the lovers of making noise, of beating drums. It costs them nothing to throw a loud shout, to assume high obligations, to come forward with an initiative, and to do nothing for its realization." For instance, "on the ship where Officer Puchkaev is the commander's political deputy, more than half a year ago obligations were undertaken which were not bad. The commander, the political worker, the other officers, the Party and the Komsomol organizations should have been concerned with how best to realize these obligations, they should have deployed hard and tenacious work to that effect. But the communists-leaders of the ship took another path. They began to declaim everywhere and at all times what a precious initiative they had shown, how much they had promised. Days followed days, but on the ship nobody was concerned with organizing the fulfillment of the obligations. When the time of accounting came, it turned out that the obligations had remained a mere sound."³

Such conduct is facilitated by an obscure and powerful belief that words will do it; that an enthusiastic resolve, "throwing one's cap into the air (*shapkukidatel'stvo*)" compels success: a faith which, to the High Command, is worth uncovering and rejecting. "The study of the new Regulations," one may point out, "is of course not an end in itself," Rather, "it is important that every person in military service...strictly obey the requirements of the Regulations..."⁴

¹ Editorial, KVS, 1973, No. 12, p. 6.

² Lt.-Gen. I. Gaidaenko, KVS, 1967, No. 6, p. 31.

³ Admiral V. Grishanov, KVS, 1967, No. 8, p. 12.

⁴ Col. K. Bushmanov, VV, 1975, No. 11, p. 6.

"The very best decision," it seems appropriate to explain, "has worth only in case it is backed up by practical deeds."¹ That is, "resolutions, however well thought through, do not decide the matter by themselves."² "It is well known"--would one say it if it were?--"that a well-composed plan is only the beginning of work, for the main thing is its realization."³ Personnel may be praised for having grasped this truth: "adopting socialist obligations for the summer period of training, the fighters understand that appeals (*prizyv*) alone will not suffice..."⁴

Instead of, or in addition to, attributing power to mere resolve, one may of course assign responsibility for execution to others. "The staff," General Pavlovskii demands, "must not work according to the principle: the document is signed--and hence it is off our backs (*s plech doloi*)."⁵

Being content with words, one may be particularly attached to words seemingly difficult to pronounce, such as admissions of one's own defects. "There is," an observer notes, "a category of people [officers] who... 'self-critically' acknowledge defects in their work," but "only in words." For instance, "more than once I met with officers V. Martynyuk and V. Yudinskii. Under the pressure of incontrovertible facts they quickly agreed that there were defects in their work. But these were revealed again at the next inspection..." Then it seems worth affirming that "the value of self criticism is determined by...the readiness to proceed immediately to the correction of mistakes."⁶

Not intending to proceed to execution, one may resolve upon the unfulfillable (and attractive). "Obligations are undertaken without taking account of real possibilities, and then not fulfilled."⁷

¹ Lt.-Col. S. Vasil'chenko, KZ, January 20, 1976.

² Editorial, KZ, May 24, 1977.

³ Col.-Gen. A. Shcheglov, KVS, 1966, No. 2, p. 20.

⁴ Lt.-Col. B. Gudymenko, VV, 1975, No. 12, p. 29.

⁵ VV, 1976, No. 4, p. 6.

⁶ Col. O. Pogrebtsov, KZ, July 1, 1976.

⁷ Editorial, VV, 1966, No. 1, p. 6.

In these conditions the High Command insists that "words not diverge from deeds," that one act "not in words, but in fact (*ne na slovakhi, a na dele*). "To be honest," it seems useful to explain, "means not to throw words to the wind, but to act upon them."¹ More positively, we must "be true to one's word," maintain "unity between word and deed," "absolutely fulfill the obligations one has assumed," "go to the end." "It is completely clear"--would one, once more, say it if it were?--"that it is insufficient for a communist to merely be in accord with Party decisions." Rather, "he is obliged to stubbornly fight for their realization."² "The question is," General Epishev believes it necessary to affirm with regard to a major "problem," "to transfer the solution of the problem of the quality of training from the plane of general slogans to that of practical realization."³ "Beyond the Decision, There Is the Carrying Through of It (*za resheniem-ispolnitel'nost'*)," proclaims a title.⁴ "Finish what you have begun" is a rule for young officers.

Those who do, receive a top grade. "Almost thirty years have passed," a general officer reminisces, "since the day when I took leave from my platoon commander Lieutenant Mindlenii. But until now he is before my eyes." Why? "He has remained in my memory as the embodiment of carrying through (*ispolnitel'nost'*). There was not a single case in which he would have terminated an exercise earlier than the time set, in which he would not have worked this or that question through to the end."⁵ "They Kept Their Word," proclaims a headline.⁶ "After the decision taken by the Party meeting, there

¹ Editorial, KVS, 1976, No. 22, p. 5.

² Col. V. Makhalov, KVS, 1966, No. 1, p. 25.

³ KVS, 1977, No. 2, p. 17.

⁴ KVS, 1967, No. 6, p. 3.

⁵ Lt.-Gen. O. Kulishev, KZ, January 6, 1976.

⁶ KZ, January 1, 1976.

followed the deed (*delo*)."¹ "What was valuable in the conduct of the sergeant was that this commander [in a simulated battle] . . . having adopted a decision, executed it to the end without vacillation."² "Lieutenant V. Novikov established the rule for himself to strictly fulfill plans."³ "If," it will be said about a model officer, "he takes something on, he will bring the matter to its end."⁴ As to Captain of the Second Rank V. Prokopov, he "is . . . a fervent partisan of faultlessly carrying through."⁵ "The staff officers of this regiment," a senior commander reports, "possess such qualities as the aspiration to fulfill a mission precisely and in the required time, at any price (*chego by eto ni stoilo*)."⁶ "For many units and ships," one may note with relief and pride, "it has become a law: if a promise is made, it must be firmly fulfilled."⁷ Thus "there is every ground for hoping that they will keep their word."⁸ "When Captain Morozov was appointed to a higher position, nobody among his older comrades doubted that he would satisfactorily discharge his new and more difficult obligations"; for "the unity of word and deed had become a norm of conduct for him."⁹ This may even be the case, if not for a whole unit, then at least for its best elements: "when you have taken an obligation, fulfill it, when you have given your word, keep it, do everything precisely in the fashion in which it was planned and promised --this immutable law became the rule for the foremost (*peredovyi*) personnel of the company."¹⁰

¹Maj. G. Shafikov, KVS, 1977, No. 13, p. 33.

²Col. F. Gredasov, KZ, January 14, 1972.

³Lt.-Col. V. Goshko, VV, No. 12, p. 42.

⁴Col. A. Kulikov, KZ, January 7, 1977.

⁵Vice-Admiral M. Ozimov, KVS, 1976, No. 9, p. 41.

⁶Lt.-Gen. S. Belonozhko, KZ, June 1, 1977.

⁷Editorial, KVS, 1976, No. 22, p. 5.

⁸Capt. P. Labutin, VV, 1976, No. 3, p. 70.

⁹Col. V. Kal'chenko, KZ, May 25, 1976.

¹⁰Lt.-Col. V. Odukhov, KVS, 1975, No. 11, p. 39.

As we by now expect to hear, such excellence "does not come by itself"; far from it. Indeed "the education of all fighters in the spirit of strict conformity to the unity of word and deed" is "a most important obligation of the political departments [in the armed forces], of Party organizations, of all communists."¹

The supreme achievement of such high effort would be to do away with the need for it. Alas, if to obtain carrying-through is not an easy task, one may say, it is even more difficult to achieve that it be not a consequence of enforcement (*prinuzhdenie*), but rather a natural necessity (*estestvennaya neobkhodimost'*). In public, the "difficulty" may be neglected, as when officers are called upon by a senior commander "to create in every military collective an atmosphere in which carrying-through . . . becomes an inner need (*potrebnost'*) of everybody."²

¹ Editorial, KVS, 1976, No. 22, p. 8.

² Lt.-Gen. O. Kubishev, KZ, January 6, 1976.

PART IV. INSTABILITY

Section 16: INTERMITTENCE

Conducting activities intermittently, "occasionally (*ot sluchaya k sluchayu*)," "in swoops (*zaskok*)" sharply impairs their yield: such is a message of the High Command to its forces in which it discerns a disposition of this kind.¹ The reason that "leading pilots do not know how to command subordinates on the ground" is that they are taught in that art intermittently.² "In the working out of elements of the program," an analyst observes, "substantial interruptions were tolerated. As a result, habits, formed at the first exercise of a theme, were partially lost subsequently."³ "Sometimes," an officer discloses, "one can observe this picture. A ship [submarine] goes out on sea after a protracted sojourn on shore. And then it becomes clear that the acousticians have in part lost their habits, classify the contact with the target slowly. It appears that during the sojourn at the base exercises were conducted intermittently."⁴ "After an interruption in flight practice," pilots "only slowly reestablished the habits they had lost."⁵

That is, "training is a . . . school of combat mastery only when it is conducted uninterruptedly, day and night" ⁶ Hence "we stubbornly strive for Party political work" as well as any other kind of work "being conducted uninterruptedly . . . removing elements of intermittence (*kampaneishchina*)" ⁷

¹ Cf. Herbert Goldhamer, *op. cit.*, pp. 90, 108.

² Maj. A. Drozdov, KZ, September 22, 1976.

³ Col. R. Dukov, VV, 1971, No. 3, p. 42.

⁴ Navy Capt. V. Poshivailov, KZ, July 28, 1976.

⁵ Lt.-Col. P. Gorchakov, KVS, 1976, No. 7, p. 49.

⁶ Editorial, VV, 1971, No. 11, p. 3.

⁷ Col. Yu. Shirinskii, KVS, 1975, No. 22, p. 40.

The achievement of "uninterruptedness" gives relief and certainty of success. Here is the "reeducation" of a difficult Private viewed by an Ensign:

"This whole history of the reeducation of the Private proceeded, as it were, without my interference. Must I derive pain from that or experience joy? I rejoice. For I know: also when the fighters are in class, during the morning setup exercises, in the evening before the television screen--there are always with them my helpers, Sergeants D'yachenko, Borisenko, Senior Sergeant Ryabokonov, the Komsomol members Kuz'menko, Tarasov. That means that the arduous process of education of the fighters is not interrupted (*prekrashchat'sya*) even for a minute."¹

A young officer makes a mistake; is tempted to give up; is induced to overcome his mistake by a subtle maneuver of his superior; achieves success:

"The day on which the commander of the unit said a good word about me, when declaring the results of socialist competition, was for me a real holiday. -- Now prepare for the exam for the second class -- Major Bukirev said to me after the meeting.

"To start with, my heart was seized by cold anguish. Will I be up to it? . . . [Were I to follow the Major's advice], it would turn out that, upon having succeeded in the first task, I would immediately without any pause (*tut zhe bez vsyakoi pauzy*) start on the next already more complicated and difficult one.

"And then I understood that this would be for the best. If one stops (*ostanovit'sya*) on one's path, one may lose the feeling of sureness which emerges after the first victory over oneself, over one's doubts and fears . . ."²

¹ M. Petrakevich, KZ, January 4, 1977.

² Lt. O. Dobrovol'skii, KZ, February 27, 1977.

Section 17: UPS AND DOWNS

The High Command discerns in its forces a disposition to fluctuate between very high and very low levels of activity. "Storms (*shturm*) and all hands' jobs (*avral*) are the rule in the life of some . . . units."¹ The other side of that is that "some acted strenuously only in the moments in which 'enemy' aircraft appeared in the air, but for the rest of the time they often aimlessly wore out their seats (*prosizhivat*') near their weapons and equipment."² "There are still comrades," a general officer observes, "who are not accustomed to work *ritmichno* (which presumably means evenly--NL), set all hopes (*upovat*') on some final spurt (*finishnyi ryvok*)."³

Yet, "'flows' and 'ebbs' in combat training lead to nothing good."⁴ When "discipline in the subunit did not improve," "the cause of this was above all the fact that in the commander's efforts in this domain, there was an insufficient insistence (*nastoichivost*'). His exactingness was uneven (*nerovnyi*) with 'flows' and 'ebbs.'"⁵

Hence "the communists of the battalion are struggling for *stable* indicators (*pokazatel*') of the fighters' [performances] . . . "⁶ While, "naturally, it is possible still to do much in the remaining weeks of the training year," "incontrovertible (*besspornyi*) is the truth (*istina*) that only rhythmical (presumably: even--NL) training in the course of the entire year, high daily exactingness can lead to stable success."⁷

To be sure, in a model unit "all programmed themes are worked out . . . evenly (*ravnomerno*) during every week, every month, and every training period."⁸

* * * * *

¹ Editorial, KVS, No. 4, p. 6.

² Col. V. Shtank'ko, KVS, 1966, No. 5, p. 45.

³ Lt.-Gen. P. Shkidchenko, quoted in KZ, August 26, 1977.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Lt.-Col. N. Minaev, KZ, November 24, 1977.

⁶ Maj. G. Shafikov, KVS, 1977, No. 13, p. 36.

⁷ Lt.-Gen. P. Shkidchenko, quoted in KZ, August 26, 1977.

⁸ Editorial, VV, 1977, No. 3, p. 7.

While low action is manifestly unproductive, intermittent peaks of activity not commanded by conditions are equally fruitless; for they are apt to issue from anxious excitement, whereas calm is a necessary condition of success.

"Persons who have not learned to master their feelings perfectly," General Pavlovskii advances, "cannot lead."¹ Their emotion will degrade their own performance; the infectiousness of that emotion will spread faulty conduct:

"Belyaev [crew member of an interceptor] got excited (*zavolnovat'sya*), the steering wheel became, as it were, disobedient. Usually impassible, confident in himself, Private V. Darevich also got excited. It became necessary for a more prepared specialist to interfere with the actions of these operators so as not to let the 'enemy' get away with impunity."

"Detailed analysis . . . showed that failure in this case almost resulted from the weak psychological tempering of the soldiers, sergeants and even of Captain Panin. His lack of sureness (*neuverennost'*), his figetyness (*suetlivost'*), his excitement (*vozbuzhdenie*) transmitted themselves to his subordinates"

At the same occasion the enemy aircraft to be intercepted is first located and then disappears: "The target signal was suddenly lost . . . the 'enemy' was maneuvering Firing Captain Panin did not contain himself (*uderzhatsya*) and raised his voice

The signal of the target was lost A soldier charged with firing who has been trained in difficult conditions and has mastery over himself would not raise his voice. He would take all measures so as to inspire calm and sureness in his subordinates."²

On the other hand, "the reports made by [my fellow] operators [in simulated air defense] sounded so assured that it became instantly clear to me: The target will not escape" ³ In the victorious submarine "a calm businesslike atmosphere reigned."⁴ And "his [Captain N. Marchenko, ground control] precise commands sound in the

¹VV, 1971, No. 1, p. 9.

²Col. A. Kantor, KZ, May 21, 1976.

³Lt. V. Sil'yanov, KZ, November 7, 1976.

⁴Capt. of the First Rank V. Tevyanskii, KZ, January 13, 1977.

ether. A former pilot, he knows how even the tone of these commands exercises an influence on the crew, gives the pilots calm and confidence "¹

Hence the demand expressed by General Pavlovskii that "the . . . commander must . . . in no case make his subordinates nervous (*nervirovat'*)",² that he "be capable of remaining calm in critical situations."³

To conform to this postulate is to possess excellence. "To work calmly and precisely"--the former a base for the latter--is a standard formula for efficient conduct. When a submarine commander in unusual and risky circumstances gives the order to launch a torpedo, "his face expressed extreme *sobrannost'*,"⁴ the contrary of *rasteryannost* (see Section 4), being all together rather than all lost. How such a stance remains forever astonishing, may be gleaned when an observer discovers that his suspicions were unfounded, as with regard to this pilot:

"He works calmly and precisely. On the ground he is moving around a great deal, does not stay at the same place. To start with, it seemed to me that he might find it difficult to concentrate in the air. But I was wrong. Vladimir Shabartsin knows how to be all in his work."⁵

It is in this vein that we hear of Sergeant of the Second Rank V. Sisov and Senior Sailor C. Litvin being "calmly concentrated (*sosredotochenyi*)."⁶ "The more difficult the situation became," it will be said of a model officer, "the more gathered in thought (*zadumchivyi*) the commander became."⁷

¹ Capt. A. Dudnik, KZ, December 7, 1977.

² VV, 1971, No. 1, p. 7.

³ KVS, 1975, No. 16, p. 32.

⁴ Lt.-Commander Yu. Timoshchuk, KZ, July 14, 1976.

⁵ Col. V. Peralytin, KZ, August 13, 1975.

⁶ Navy Capt. N. Buchinskii, KZ, June 2, 1977.

⁷ Col. R. Dukov, VV, 1968, No. 4, p. 32.

"Senior Lieutenant Kurdenkov's voice carries his precise commands. His calm communicates itself to the whole unit."¹

"Many among us [naval commanders], for instance, envied the mastery with which Captain of the First Rank V. Sedel'nikov always berthed. . . . Unexpectedly I discovered the secret of his success. Sedel'nikov, in a situation which was tense . . . conducted himself entirely . . . calmly. I promised myself that I would behave precisely in that way in similar situations: even, calm, without outbursts (*raznos*) and hustle (*sueta*) which appear to others a sign of business-likeness. The result turned out to be astounding. With the same crew, without supplementary training, we began to berth more quickly and better."²

"Calm" is obtained, if it is, in hard struggle to contain one's excitement. When decision in simulated combat approached, "I made an effort to 'remove myself' from all sufferings of the soul."³

"On the eve of firing exercises Captain N. Zhukov suffered much nervousness However, as soon as combat work began, the officer was able . . . to 'remove himself' from all jamming from the soul."⁴

"Battery commander Lieutenant Victor Kapitanov prepared himself for artillery combat. He went from one combat post to the other, giving last indications. His voice sounded calm and businesslike. The subordinates of Kapitanov . . . could, none of them, suppose that in reality the lieutenant was truly upset (*volnovatsya*). And there were serious grounds for that."⁵

¹Senior Lt. O. Balakin, KZ, November 12, 1976.

²Capt. of the First Rank M. Sokolov, KZ, May 20, 1976.

³Lt. V. Sil'yanov, KZ, November 7, 1976.

⁴Majors V. Kolvenkov and A. Bedzhanyan, KZ, November 17, 1976.

⁵Navy Capt. L. Klimchenko, KZ, February 6, 1977.

Section 18: TO AND FRO

There is, the High Command discerns, a disposition in its forces to "dash (*sharakhat'*) from one side to the other," to "throw oneself from one extreme into the other," an aversion against keeping on the same couse. "The column," an observer notes, "moved unevenly (*neravnomerno*): at moments it extended itself, at moments it became shorter. There could be no question here of a stability of speed."¹ Commanders having given "preliminary instructions" to subordinates "begin sometimes even after a considerable time, to transmit all kinds of supplements which . . . reduce to naught all the previous work of the subordinates."²

Fluctuations of "mood" may command unevenness of conduct. "It occurs," observes a general officer, "that an officer 'with a hot hand' announces a punishment, and then . . . 'thinks it over.'"³ General Pavlovskii portrays a "commander of a regiment who one day, let us say, tolerates serious defects and another day is a stickler for every trifle."⁴

In particular, there is a penchant to "break the timetable," to replace the regular recurrence of activities at set times by the unpredictable spontaneity. "Often," notes an analyst, "the timetable of the day is not obeyed, the set sequence of tasks is violated, without adequate reasons lessons are transferred from one hour to another, the soldiers are torn out of an exercise for all kinds of work."⁵ "The routine of the day," observes General Pavlovskii, "is broken, . . . instead of certain exercises others are conducted . . . "⁶

¹Sr. Lt. Yu. Saltykov, KZ, August 27, 1976.

²Col.-Gen. V. Yakushin, VV, 1976, No. 12, p. 16.

³Maj.-Gen. A. Volkov, KZ, April 15, 1976.

⁴VV, 1971, No. 1, p. 6.

⁵Lt.-Col. I. Noskov, KVS, 1968, No. 9, p. 50.

⁶KZ, January 10, 1976.

"Ensign Yu. Suyazov, acting as platoon commander, was to utilize a model of the locality so as to train fire guidance men in correcting fire. But nothing had been prepared for this, even the blanks for noting the results of the observations were lacking. Instead, all-arms protective clothing was at hand, and it was decided to work on the norms for putting on protective means. The ensign, as it later turned out, did not know at all which exercise was to be held according to plan."¹

The regularity to be destroyed may be of the past rather than of the present:

"Naturally, a new commander . . . will revise something in the style and methods of work of even a gifted and experienced predecessor. However, it happens that 'the old order' is broken . . . without this being indispensable. . . . There are those who in haste change what . . . should have been strengthened."²

Against such dispositions the High Command requires to nip in the bud (*presekat'*) the arbitrary changing of agreed times of exercises. General Epishev call upon "commanders, political departments, and staffs . . . to secure strict conformity . . . to the timetable of activities";³ General Pavlovskii requires of commanders that their "level of exactingness be always the same."⁴ He recalls that "it is important . . . to maintain a precise rhythm in all troop links,"⁵ while General Epishev deems it "important to develop among officers, generals and admirals the capacity . . . to bring rhythm (*ritmichnost'*) into the work of the entire military collective,"⁶ that word connoting smoothness-by-evenness.

¹Col. E. Babynin, KZ, January 29, 1977.

²Navy Capt. V. Shutkin, KZ, May 4, 1977.

³KVS, 1977, No. 2, p. 18.

⁴VV, 1971, No. 1, p. 6.

⁵KVS, 1971, No. 1, p. 20.

⁶KVS, 1977, No. 2, p. 21.

Achieving it is attaining excellence. "Our unit . . . has attained a punctual fulfillment of the timetable of occupations."¹ "This work (never mind which--NL) is conducted permanently in the regiment . . . it does not know flows and ebbs":² it is neither discontinuous, nor fluctuating in level nor shifting in direction.

That does not "come by itself." "It is much easier to realize some single 'high-sound' measure than to struggle day by day to obtain that soldiers and sergeants apply the daily timetable"³

Section 19: FALLING FROM EXCELLENCE

"Having attained success, they rested content (*uspokoit'sya*) with their achievement," "they reduced their efforts," "they lost (*utrati't'*) the skills they had acquired": this fate hangs, in the High Command's expectation, over any fighter or unit who has risen to heights.

One's infatuation with self having been stimulated by success, one may, it is implied, hardly notice that one is now permitting one's effort to sag and one's performance to sink.

"It sometimes happens that an excellent grade obtained in a firing exercise provokes the so-called 'firing range sickness.' It is characterized by a spirit of . . . complacency."⁴

"Sometimes, having attained success, one weakens one's efforts, ceases to react sharply to defects Thus it happened for instance in the squadron commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel G. Tartygin. After the unit had become 'excellent,' there was an effort (*staratsya*) not to notice the reduction in responsibility of some comrades As a result indicators fell, the squadron lost the name of 'excellent.'"⁵

¹ Capt. V. Marchenko, KZ, February 5, 1977.

² Lt.-Col. M. Korotaev, KVS, 1967, No. 6, p. 34.

³ Sr. Lt. A. Smirnov, KZ, January 13, 1976.

⁴ Maj. V. Pimenov, KZ, November 11, 1976.

⁵ Editorial, KZ, August 24, 1976.

Worse, the successful ones may imagine that maintaining is less arduous than acquiring; whereas "as the saying goes, to consolidate a success is not easier than to conquer it."¹ "We allot much attention," an observer recalls, "to the . . . education of fighters struggling for the name of 'excellent.' But now they have attained success. 'The whole affair is done, that load is off our chests . . . ' we consider. And we transfer attention to others. After all, there is no need to worry about the 'excellent' ones."² "Sometimes," an anonymous authority agrees, "commanders and political workers in the armed forces, concentrating all attention on those soldiers who fall behind and who are undisciplined, lose sight of those who do not worry them with regard to their results in learning and in their conduct." But "this . . . not infrequently turns against the educators with 'unexpected' surprises: some of the foremost ones (*peredoviki*) reduce their effort in learning, permit themselves defects in service and loss . . . the name of 'excellent.'"³

"Two years ago the Division had conquered the name of 'excellent.' And then it obtained the second place in the District It seemed that nothing announced a fall . . . and then suddenly in the examination exercise annoying lapses occurred. How could this happen? . . . We put this question to many, to the commanders as well as the soldiers. There was one conclusion: the missile troops had become arrogant (*zaznat'sya*), complacent (*uspokoit'sya*). Successes had turned their heads. The strenuousness of exercises diminished. Sometimes they were even omitted"⁴

"Capt. V. Makar'ev was not without grounds considered a well-prepared officer He was promoted The comrade decided that with his talents he did not need to work with a full straining of his forces, that the experience he had acquired earlier would suffice him for a long time. He weakened in exactingness . . . and this was the outcome: at one of the exercises his unit did not fulfill its mission."⁵

¹ Lt.-Col. M. Korotaev, KVS, 1966, No. 3.

² Capt. V. Goryachikh, KZ, January 30, 1976. Dots in the text.

³ Editorial, KZ, September 4, 1975.

⁴ Col. V. Ivanov, VV, 1976, No. 12, p. 52.

⁵ Col.-Gen. F. Krivda, KZ, October 29, 1976.

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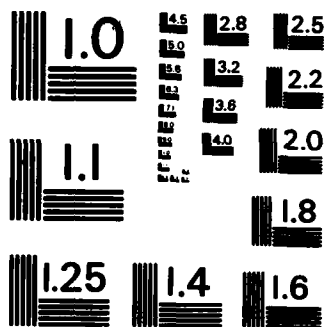
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FORM 10

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MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART
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Often it is difficult for the reader to discern whether one falls from one's high place because one comes to overestimate what one is doing or because one underrates what it takes to stay on top:

"During five years the squadron commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel G. Tartygin was the first in competition. But recently moods of complacency (*samospokoennost'*) appeared in the unit."¹

"Some members of the KPSS, under the impression of the high marks received last year, . . . weakened their attention to military training."²

"One cannot say that things go badly in this artillery division. It has what to be proud of . . . But if earlier all fighters of the unit distinguished themselves by a rigorous attitude towards the smallest violation of regulations, today symptoms of complacency (*blagodushie*) visibly show themselves."³

"When his fellow officers congratulated Leonid Yakovlevich on the high rating he had obtained, one of them said enviously: 'Now you will be able (*mozno*) to live in tranquility (*spokoino*)!'"⁴

Against its subordinates' disposition to take it easy the High Command affirms that you only have the choice between rising and falling:

"It is very important that higher commanders and political organs daily concern themselves with the perfecting of the . . . qualities of officer-leaders. When this is not done, particular commanders cease to *increase* their knowledge, *lag* behind in the level of their preparation . . . and then commit serious *mistakes*. Precisely this happened with Officer I. Kochubei who lost many positive qualities and finally *proved incapable* of leading his subordinates."⁵

¹ Editorial, KVS, 1976, No. 22, p. 6.

² Lt.-Col. M. Kuz'min, KVS, 1976, No. 8, p. 49.

³ Lt.-Col. V. Kholodul'kin, KZ, April 19, 1977.

⁴ Maj.-Gen. A. Sadovnikov, KZ, September 7, 1977.

⁵ Lt.-Gen. I. Khalipov, KVS, 1967, No. 6, p. 20.

So difficult does it appear to strain for yet another advance (*rubezh*) in the face of success, that the wise commander may ask for an achievement not to be acknowledged:

"The staff and the political department evaluated the work of the crew commanded by...Captain of the Second Rank A. Smirnov in strict and exacting fashion. In all respects, the performance merited a fully weighted five (the highest grade - NL). However, the commander of the ship insistently asked that the highest grade not be awarded. Smirnov considered that even the grade of good (four - NL) in some way would be an advance for the crew which not so long ago had had the reputation of lacking in cohesion (*nesobrannyyi*). A five, even if it were honestly merited...could create some complacency in the personnel at the most difficult moment."¹

Captain Smirnov, whose request was granted, showed the required "permanent dissatisfaction (*neudovletvorennost'*) with what has already been achieved," the proper "sense of responsibility for the stability of the success attained," the fitting "sense of responsibility for the creation of reliable reserves on behalf of the stability of success," and hence "the capacity to maintain himself (*utverdit'sya*) in the position reached."

Section 20: GIVING UP

While the evidence I have been able to assemble is, as the reader will see in a moment, thin indeed, I have the hunch that the High Command suspects its forces of a disposition to give up in difficulty.

Not doing so may be presented as an act of excellence. "There was not a single case," one may insist, "in which the platoon commander would have renounced (*otmakhnut'sya*) solving an unintelligible question --without a fail he clarified it."² "There were, it is true," one may say about the conduct of a model commander, "also some failures" yet "the commander did not lower his hands"; "he did not change a correct

¹ Navy Capt. V. Shutkin, KZ, May 4, 1977.

² Lt.-Col. F. Semyanovskii, KZ, April 26, 1977.

decision merely because . . . it was not feasible to attain the objective right away."¹ "They did not lower their hands at the first failure" is, in fact, a formula.²

There is then a corresponding requirement. "Don't lower your hands as soon as a mishap occurs," demands an officer of a subordinate.³

Rather, show "stubbornness in the attainment of the objective."⁴ "steadfastness (*ustoichoivost'*)," "insistence and persistence (*nastoichivost'*)": major words; merely aiming for the heights or also straining to avoid the depths?

¹ Lt.-Col. M. Korotaev, KVS, 1967, No. 6, p. 34.

² E.g., VV, 1966, No. 4, p. 18.

³ Lt. O. Dobrovol'skii, KZ, February 27, 1977.

⁴ Passim, e.g., KVS, 1976, No. 3, p. 13.